John Donne Journal
Vol. 31 (2012)

Conceiving Bodies, Intertextuality, and Censorship in *Metempsychosis*

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Donne's *Metempsychosis*, a poem of fifty-two ten-line stanzas, traces the transmigrations of the "deathless soul"[1] of Genesis's forbidden apple, culminating in Cain's wife Themech. The narration of eleven vegetable and animal incarnations and four secondary incorporations[2] freely mixes intensely naturalistic detail[3] with graphic violence, near pornography, and blatant moralizations, and is interrupted by frequent asides to the reader. With the exception of the two *Anniversaries*, *Metempsychosis* is Donne's longest and most capacious poem, but the experience of reading it is a chaotic one. A series of prefatory textual units further confuse the reader's approach: multiple polylingual titles (including the commonly used "The Progress of the Soul"), a prose "Epistle" to the reader, and an opening epic invocation

I would like to thank both the anonymous reader for the *John Donne Journal* and Elizabeth D. Harvey for help refining and focusing this paper.

[1]Donne, *Metempsychosis*, in *The Complete Poems of John Donne*, rev. ed., ed. Robin Robbins (Harlow, England, and New York: Longman, 2010), line 1. Unless otherwise specified, all further quotations from Donne's poems are taken from this edition and cited parenthetically by line number.

[2]The soul is incarnated in the apple, a mandrake, a sparrow, two fish, a whale, a mouse, a wolf, a wolf-dog, an ape, and Themech. Its incarnations are swallowed or otherwise incorporated by a snake, a swan, a "sea-pie" (or oyster-catcher, an aquatic bird [Robbins, p. 445 n. 274]), and an elephant.

[3]For example, the fertilization of fish eggs, the growth of a mandrake root, the development of a fetus in the womb, a baby sparrow picking a hole in its shell and extruding its first feathers, and fishes' mysterious ability to breathe under water.

that breaks the narrative frame.[4] Because it bills itself as only the "First Song" of many, and claims to trace the soul to the present day, critics have even doubted that the poem is finished.

The poem's overt attempts to shape its reader's response strain against the careening trajectory of its "progress." While early critics focused on a pattern of moral decline, reaching its nadir in Themech (who "knew treachery, / Rapine, deceit, and lust, and ills enow / To be a woman" [507–509]),[5] the poem equally describes an epistemological decline, repeatedly intertwining problems of knowledge with questions regarding its vehicles of transmission and embodiment, including the textual vehicle of the poem itself. This is most dramatically visible in the yawning gap between the poem's opening and closing stanzas. The opening stanza's epic omniscience, its ambition to sing the unified life-history of "th'great world to his aged evening / From infant morn, through manly noon" (5–6), clashes jarringly with the closing stanza's portrayal of the diffusion, if not schism, of knowledge, its invitation to "wonder with me / Why ploughing, building, ruling and the rest, / . . . / By cursed Cain's race invented be, / And blest Seth vexed us with astronomy" (513–517). The unity of knowledge embodied in the world generates a conception of the poem as "A work t'outwear Seth's pillars, brick and stone, / And (Holy Writ excepted) made to yield to none" (9–10), a monumentally definitive text parallel if (barely) subordinate to the Bible. Conversely, the genealogical schism between Seth's and Cain's descendants, when used to evaluate the arts they invented, results in an amoral scepticism: "There's nothing simply good nor ill alone: / Of ev'ry quality comparison / The only measure is, and judge, opinion" (518–

[4]The 1633 edition prints a four-line title before the "Epistle": "INFINITATI SACRUM / 16. *Augusti* 1601. / METEMPSYCOSIS / *Poêma Satyricon*." The Epistle is followed by the second title "The Progresse of the Soule," of which the poem proper is called the "First Song." The poem is usually assumed to have been written in the year or so before the given date, when Donne was employed by Egerton and had met Anne More.

[5]For example, M. van Wyck Smith and Janel Mueller both identified a source for the poem's conceit of increasing moral depravity through successive transmigrations in the writings of the Gnostic Carpocrates. See van Wyck Smith, "John Donne's *Metempsychosis*," *Review of English Studies* 24.93 (1973): 17–25 and 24.94 (1973): 141–152; and Mueller, "Donne's Epic Venture in *Metempsychosis*," *Modern Philology* 70.2 (1972): 109–137.

520). Here the poem is a "sullen writ" (511), gloomily silent, at least on ethical questions. It is as if the whole project of the poem has escaped the intentions of its authorial persona, resulting in a text with a profoundly ambiguous status, split into contradictory fragments, which are, like the soul's transient incarnations, of dubious enduring value.

In one sense, this intertwining of epistemological and hermeneutical dissolution or decay is the result of the poem's narrative strategy; Donne's persona claims to relay and interpret the narrative of the puzzled soul. While the soul becomes inclined to evil by repeatedly experiencing epistemological frustration in its shifting embodiments, the narrator's ongoing experience of hermeneutical frustration produces his scepticism. The narrator's opening certainty about the great soul's knowledge of the past is countered immediately by his uncertainty about his own future, his appeal to Destiny to "vouch thou safe to look / And show my story, in thy eternal book" (36–37). This implied fear of transgression is soon echoed by a discussion of the Fall, the emblem of dangerous curiosity, from which a secondary suspicion about the Fall itself results. Though countered by an appeal to the "Heav'nly Spirit" (111) to prevent "vain" speculation, the poem also invokes corporeal punishment's silencing effects:

> Arguing is heretics' game, and exercise,
> As wrestlers, perfects them; not liberties
> Of speech, but silence, hands, not tongues, end heresies.
> (118–120)

As the poem progresses, all types of knowledge become increasingly uncertain and unsafe as they become deeply intertwined with highly variable forms of corporeality.

The poem's approach to the relationship of corporeality to knowledge mixes theology, philosophy, ethics and politics. The soul's subsequent experiences show that the appeal to the grace of the Spirit has limited practical application. In worldly matters, "better proof the law / Of sense than faith requires" (127–128), punning on the double meaning of "sense" as reason and the sensory basis of empiricism. The lack of either is corporally and morally destructive. The senseless mandrake, "as a slumb'rer stretching on his bed" (144) with its "blind eyes, deaf ears" and "dumb" mouth (151) is unable to dispute or reason, and so victim to Eve.

The sparrow in his amorous conquests "asks . . . not who did so taste, nor when, / Nor if his sister or his niece she be" (195–196) and so copulates indiscriminately, incestuously, to his death. The midpoint of the poem explicitly severs natural-philosophical knowledge from faith in the mystery of fish breathing underwater:

> And whether she leap up sometimes to breath
> And suck in air, or find it underneath,
> Or working parts like mills or limbecks hath
> To make the water thin and air-like, faith
> Cares not. . . .
>
> (264–268)

At the end of this stanza, we encounter the poem's central emblem of uncertainty, the fish who hesitates between salt and fresh water. Lest we think the retreat from theological problems provides certainty, the next stanza reminds us how the senses, even when active, can be deceived, as in the case of the fish who is magnified by water for the bird who will eat it:

> So far from hiding her guests, water is,
> That she shows them in bigger quantities
> Then they are. . . .
>
> (271–273)

This uncertainty in scale, however, is in its consequences a magnified and treacherous certainty.

From this point on uncertainty in the poem increases, with the systematic exception of the certainty that allows violence, chaos, and deceit. The unsuspecting whale is killed by the conspiring thresher and swordfish, and the oblivious elephant is murdered by the mouse. The Wolf "could kill as soon as go" (403), that is, without being taught. Abel's bitch, "her faith . . . quite, but not her love forgot" (425) betrays his confidence for the wolf's, and their hybrid son, "a riddling lust" (437), betrays both parents' kinds: "like a spy to both sides false, he perished" (450). Both actors in the penultimate ape-seduction exhibit uncertainty and error. The ape "wonders" "why he cannot laugh and speak his mind" (465–466) and is "misled" to "things" "too high" (471–472); his goal, Siphatecia, at first "was silly, and knew not what he meant" (481), an

ignorance that gives way to indifference, as she gives way to his advances: "she knew not first, now cares not what he doth" (484). Finally, Themech possesses an entirely perverse certainty, for "she knew treachery, / Rapine, deceit, and lust" (507–508). The soul's certainty, marked by the word "knew," contrasts strongly with the narrator's invitation to the reader to "wonder with me" (513), concluding in the poem's praise of "opinion" (520), the antithesis of knowledge understood as certainty.

This invitation to the reader underscores that even at its most unsettling, *Metempsychosis* envisions reading as an active process. This is implicit in Donne's parenthetical insistence in the Epistle that "I would have no such readers as I can teach," and explicit in the final stanza's apostrophe to these readers, "Whoe'er thou be'st that read'st this sullen writ, / Which just so much courts thee as thou dost it" (511–512). The reader is to be an equal partner with the text in the hermeneutical process. If the prestige of the text declines as reader and narrator move from its beginning to its end, it is as a result of their shared recognition of the difficulty of the hermeneutical process. This difficulty leaves the author on the sidelines[6] and readers more than usually free to make their own interpretations, to disagree with the conclusions of narrator and great soul.

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[6]Wyman H. Herendeen observes that the narrator's ambition in the epic invocation to "in sad, lone ways, a lively sprite, / Make my dark, heavy poem light and light" (54–55) is a form of incarnation of the author in his poem ("'I launch at paradise, and saile toward home': *The Progresse of the Soule* as Palinode," in *Wrestling with God: Literature and Theology in the English Renaissance, Essays to Honour Paul Grant Stanwood*, ed. Mary Ellen Henley and W. Speed Hill [Vancouver: M. E. Henley, 2001], pp. 125–126). While Herendeen considers this to be indicative of Donne's poem's status as a "causeway" leading to his more devout "La Corona" poems, I would stress instead its indication of the hermeneutical darkness of a poem stripped of its Foucauldian "author function." Ronald J. Corthell and John Klause also make useful observations on *Metempsychosis*'s conception of the author. See Corthell, "Donne's *Metempsychosis*: An 'Alarum to Truth,'" *SEL* 21.1 (1981): 97–110; and Klause, "The Montaigneity of Donne's *Metempsychosis*," in *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation*, ed. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 418–443.

While literary genres are useful for controlling interpretation, critics have shown that Donne's use of literary genre in *Metempsychosis* is exceedingly complex and marked by extreme hybridity.[7] The conceit of transmigration passing between species (a conventional trope for textual genres) but retaining memory suggests the need for a more flexible approach. I propose instead treating the poem as a heterogeneous mixture of transmigratory textual elements of various sizes and scales. Though this approach can be framed in terms of theories of intertextuality, it also involves much broader philosophical problems. As has long been recognized, *Metempsychosis* appears to be a disordered patchwork of natural historical "facts" (drawn from standard but unreliable texts and from experience); natural philosophical, political, and theological problems; and biblical narratives and genealogies (apocryphal and canonical).[8] The critics who have taken this property the most seriously have placed *Metempsychosis* in the literary tradition of paradox or

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[7]*Metempsychosis* has been analyzed against a variety of generic backgrounds: Mock-epic, either Ovidian (Mueller) or DuBartasian (Susan Snyder, "Donne and Du Bartas: *The Progresse of the Soule* as Parody," *Studies in Philology* 70.4 [1973]: 392–407); Spenserian political allegory (van Wyck Smith; Arthur F. Marotti, *John Donne, Coterie Poet* [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986]; Brian Blackley, "The Generic Play and Spenserian Parody of John Donne's *Metempsychosis*," PhD diss., University of Kentucky, 1994) or physiological allegory (Elizabeth D. Harvey, "The Souls of Animals: John Donne's *Metempsychosis* and Early Modern Natural History," *Environment and Embodiment in Early Modern England*, ed. Mary Floyd-Wilson and Garret A. Sullivan, Jr. [Houndmills, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007], pp. 55–70, and "Nomadic Souls: Pythagoras, Spenser, Donne," *Spenser Studies* 22 [2007]: 257–279) and beast-fable; Philonic allegory (R. A. Murray, "What was the Soul of the Apple?," *Review of English Studies* 10.38 [1959]: 141–155); moralizing satire; collection of paradoxes (Corthell); Montaignesque essay (Klause); and palinode (Herendeen). Most of these treatments acknowledge hybridities implied by the subtitle, "Poema Satyricon," but as the range of genres shows, the exact nature of this mixture has been vigorously debated. My approach falls closest to those of Corthell, Klause, Snyder, and Harvey.

[8]For example, Murray identifies Pseudo-Philo's *Jewish Antiquities* as the source for some of the names of Adam's children in the poem (p. 143 n. 6). Robbins identifies the apocryphal histories of Annius of Viterbo as the source of the cognomen "Holy Janus" applied to Noah (p. 428 n. 21).

the philosophical tradition of scepticism.[9] But because this intertextual hybridity is also an interdisciplinary hybridity, it imports into the poem specific uncertainties concerning the relationships of the disciplines involved. The closing stanza's confusion about the relative value of Seth's and Cain's arts is only one example of this disciplinary slurry.

A clearer example, perhaps an overriding paradigm for intertextual interdisciplinarity, is the opening stanza's ostensible subordination of the world's history to "holy writ"; that is, the intertextual relationship between the Bible and the "Book of Nature," a metaphor which blends hermeneutics and epistemology. The understanding of the relationship between these two "books" was, of course, in this period undergoing transformations associated with the Reformation and the Scientific Revolution. Partly for this reason, Donne begins his *Essayes in Divinity* by establishing an orderly hierarchy of hermeneutics between these books and the Book of the Elect. While the Book of the Elect is inaccessible, our "orderly love to the understanding" of the Bible "testifies" to our election.[10] However, the Church teaches that the Bible can only be read with difficulty, and none may "trespass upon this book, without inward

[9]Corthell, relying on the work of Rosalie Colie, argues that the poetry of paradox is marked by certain conventions, including "equivocation, exploitation of competing systems of value, the posing of insoluble problems or tasks, and denials of limitations imposed by the work itself" (p. 101), and devices, such as mock encomia, oxymorons, and philosophical quibbles (p. 107), all found in *Metempsychosis.* Klause, after showing how attempts at generic form such as "epic, satire, theological commentary, metahistory, and allegory . . . are checked and defeated . . . alluded to rather than embodied" (p. 431) argues that *Metempsychosis* should be read as a poetic adaptation of Montaigne's essay form. Whereas Corthell argues that Donne's use of paradox in *Metempsychosis* is designed (as Donne claimed of his *Paradoxes and Problems*) to be "an alarum to truth," forcing readers to create their own syntheses, Klause claims that Donne's use of the essay genre indicates Donne's desire to borrow Montaigne's self-reflective tracing of his own fallible mental processes, and sees in Donne's poem, epistle, and subtitle ("*Infinitati Sacrum*") echoes of Montaigne's complicated use of other authors and his awareness and fear of an "infinity" of atomized empirical facts unbound by unifying norms (pp. 438–440).

[10]Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, ed. Anthony Raspa (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2001), p. 9. All further quotations from Donne's *Essayes in Divinity* are taken from this edition and cited parenthetically by page number.

humility, and outward interpretations. For it is not enough to have *objects*, and *eyes* to see, but you must have *light* too" (p. 9), a light provided by interpretive traditions. The Book of Nature, "subordinate" to the Bible, is legible to all, but Donne is sceptical of Raymond Sebond's natural theology, particularly its claims to find Christian ethical teachings and the doctrine of the Trinity in nature. Moreover, Scripture's authority is qualitatively different than that of philosophy. Compared to the "books of the Philosophers" the Bible "hath in it a *Certainty* . . . *Dignity* [needing no witnesses] . . . *a non Notis* [requiring no reasons]. . . . And it hath *Sufficiency;* for it either rejecteth or judgeth all Traditions" (p. 10). The Bible's absolutist power over philosophy is only partly due its treatment of the next life and its reception by revelation. It has the further Augustinian semiotic property that, unlike other books in which only words signify things, in the Bible "all the *things* signify other *things*" (p. 10). This greatly increases the need for external interpretive "light," even while it permits Scripture to be applied to a wide range of "traditions."

The opening stanza of *Metempsychosis* suggests how we should think of the poem in relationship to these three books:

> I sing the progress of a deathless soul
> Whom Fate, which God made, but doth not control,
> Placed in *most shapes*; *All times* before the Law
> Yoked us, and when, and since, in this I sing;
> And th'great world to his aged evening
> From infant morn through manly noon I draw.
> What the gold Chaldee or silver Persian saw,
> Greek brass or Roman iron, *is in this one*;
> A work t'outwear Seth's pillars, brick and stone,
> *And (Holy Writ excepted) made to yield to none*.
>
> (1–10, my italics)

The phrase "in this one" announces the all-encompassing ambitions of the poem. Marked by the materiality and Ovidian features Janel Mueller has described, and spanning "most shapes" of the human, animal, and vegetable kingdoms, the poem *is* the Book of Nature, the ultimate work of natural history. But it is also merged with the Book of Destiny (a secularized version of the Book of the Elect), which the speaker in the invocation asks to illicitly read and incorporate. Furthermore, as an

interpolation into the narrative of Genesis (or a transmigratory graft into biblical genealogy) it is a textual hybridization with the "Holy Writ" to which it claims to "yield." In stark contrast with the position of the *Essayes*, in *Metempsychosis*, the corporeal boundaries between these three books are totally indefinable.

The opening stanza also implies that along with natural history, the poem will span the scriptural genres of law, prophecy, and (with its citation of Daniel's four empires) political history. In doing so the poem straddles many of the disciplinary fault lines of the late sixteenth century hinted at in the *Essayes*. As a juxtaposition of philosophy and theology, it is a test case for natural theologies like Sebond's. As a narrative set after the Fall but "before the Law," it tests theories of natural law and their relation to biblical law. As a collection of interpolations into the Bible, it questions the status of the Bible as history. As a poem that frequently but ambivalently moralizes natural phenomena, it participates in the decline of what has been called the "emblematic" approach to natural history, which often relied on biblical animal symbolism. On these disciplinary issues Donne's *Essayes* are cautious. He asserts the Bible's uniqueness because in it "things signifie other things" (p. 10); but he also asserts that the Bible is to be read historically where it provides a history of creation, and only for moral precepts which are "evidently distinguishable without violence" (pp. 21–22).[11]

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[11]This latter issue is perhaps best exemplified in the critical tradition by Murray's early argument that the poem follows Philo's approach to reconciling philosophy with the Bible by allegorizing Genesis, and Karl P. Wentersdorf's laborious discovery of pagan or Christian sexual symbolism associated with nearly every animal in the poem ("Symbol and Meaning in Donne's *Metempsychosis* or *The Progresse of the Soule*," *SEL* 22 [1982]: 69–90). These approaches are equally violent in their denial of meaningful structure to the narrative and their disregard of its many naturalistic details.

For relatively brief overviews of the changing relationship between the Bible, natural history, and philosophy, with special attention the issue of hermeneutics, see Peter Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); and James D. Bono, *The Word of God and the Languages of Man: Interpreting Nature in Early Modern Science and Medicine* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995). For a specific case study focusing on a widely read non-specialist, Jean Bodin, see Ann Blair, *The Theatre of Nature: Jean Bodin and Renaissance Science* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton

Judged by the *Essayes*, the stakes in making an interpretation of *Metempsychosis* are high, for if our "orderly love to the understanding" is evidence of our election, the narrator's frustrated reading of his own disordered poem testifies to the opposite. Unlike many who have approached the poem, I think a reader can arrange its facts and intertexts meaningfully and without too much violence. In this essay, I would like to show that the narrative is scaffolded by a series of interpretive problems that replicate and deepen these interdisciplinary problems. The poem is constructed as a ring, a series of episodes symmetrically arranged around a thematically significant center. In order to perceive the structure, a reader must isolate the episodes and, making "of ev'ry quality, comparison" (519), recognize their correspondences, which usually involve juxtapositions of disciplines. Helpfully, obvious structural units demarcate the episodes: its fifty-two stanzas and the series of incarnations and secondary incorporations of the "great soul." Though some critics have seen this sequence of bodies as an ascent on the chain of being countered by a moral decline (perhaps excepting the fish), neither stanzas nor bodies should be conceived of as monolithic signifiers of value or uniform containers of meaning, but instead, as capacious, conflicted, and polysemic.[12] While biblical intertexts shared or distributed between them often link the bodies and stanzas, far from acting as a judge of all traditions (as Donne asserts in his *Essayes*), the intertexts instead emphasize the polysemy and uncertainty that results from interpreting isolated facts, fragments of the poem, or fragments of Scripture against different disciplinary backgrounds. In *every* case these

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University Press, 1997). For a recent general study of Renaissance natural history, see Brian W. Ogilvie, *The Science of Describing: Natural History in Renaissance Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). The work of Jean Bodin is one relevant example of an attempt to integrate divine, human, and natural history and to ground positive law in natural law (see Blair, especially pp. 19–20 and 68–69). For the decline of "emblematic" natural history, William B. Ashworth, Jr. provides a focused discussion ("Natural History and the Emblematic World View," in *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution*, ed. David C. Lindberg and Robert S. Westman [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990], pp. 303–332); see also Harrison, Bono, and Ogilvie (especially chapter 1).

[12]See Harvey for a related discussion of bodies and stanzas in *Metempsychosis* ("Nomadic Souls," pp. 260–262).

conflicts are based on incompatible understandings of knowledge or agency and of the material bodies knowledge or agency depends upon, forms, and informs. These conflicting understandings of bodies and knowledge are the source of the poem's unsettling epistemological and moral implications.[13]

Following an outline of the proposed ring structure, I will discuss the major episodes of the poem in detail, showing how the ring structure shapes an interdisciplinary reading. I will conclude by showing how the ring structure helps to situate the poem in the historical aftermath of the 1599 "Bishop's Ban" of satire. The poem's hermeneutical complexities may be Donne's very personal response to this attempt to discipline bodies and texts.

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The first hint of *Metempsychosis*'s ring structure is the poem's use of architectural metaphors to describe itself. The epistle describes such introductions as "the porches and entries of [poets'] buildings" and the poem uses the term "room" throughout to instruct readers to think of the poem spatially. The poem's monumental status allowing it "t'outwear Seth's pillars, brick and stone" (9) depends on its being read outside of its linear structure, assuming the "allegorick and typick" (*Essayes*, p. 10) properties of the "holy writ" to which it claims to yield. A spatial conception of the poem's architecture makes such a reading plausible.[14]

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[13]The ring structure prompts readers to deeply consider a wide range of questions constellated around problems of knowledge: What are the political uses and manipulations of knowledge? How do embodiment and gender affect knowledge? How does original sin affect the human bodily and mental faculties involved in understanding? How are grace and free will involved in the acquisition and use of knowledge? How are various disciplinary boundaries or "bodies of knowledge" transgressed or reinforced? Can reason be applied to the understanding of theological paradoxes? What is the relationship of reason to faith? How is textuality a useful or limiting medium of knowledge, and how are literary genres useful or limiting conventions? How are textual and experimental methods, and more generally authority and experience, related forms of knowledge?

[14]In *Triumphal Forms: Structural Patterns in Elizabethan Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), Alastair Fowler discusses the use of

More generally, architectural metaphors suggest the techniques of the Ciceronian arts of memory, which would have enabled readers to perceive and meditate on a spatial poetic structure.

The anthropologist Mary Douglas has identified seven general rules for rings, which I paraphrase:

1. There is often an exposition or prologue, "bland or somewhat enigmatic," stating a dilemma or doubt, anticipating both the central turn and the ending.
2. The ring is split into two halves in such a way as to accentuate the central turn.
3. The ring has parallel sections, often containing surprising correspondences between items not otherwise taken to be similar, thus "taking the text to deeper levels of analogy," and forming a challenge for readers.
4. The ring has indicators to clearly demarcate individual sections.
5. The central turn should be unmistakable, and is often linked to word clusters at the beginning and end.
6. There are often rings within rings.
7. There is closure at two levels. The end signals itself both by the use of conspicuous repetitions from the exposition, and by thematic correspondences.[15]

While the purposes of rings vary from text to text, these formal properties are generally shared; *Metempsychosis* exhibits all except the optional sixth. Douglas observes that rings often go unrecognized by readers who tend to see their repetitiveness as disorganization;[16] this has

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architectural metaphors to signal certain kinds of structural form in poetry (pp. 17–18), and S. K. Heninger described similar ideas in the "Pythagorean" poetry of Spenser and Sidney (*Touches of Sweet Harmony: Pythagorean Cosmology and Renaissance Poetics* [San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1974]).

[15]Douglas, *Thinking in Circles: An Essay on Ring Composition* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 36–38. *Thinking in Circles*, Douglas's last book, is both a lucid presentation of the properties and significance of ring structures and a brief overview of their presence in world literature, including the Bible and classical epic; *Metempsychosis*'s participation in these genres may partly explain Donne's use of ring structure.

[16]Douglas, p. 56.

been the case for *Metempsychosis*. But when recognized, Douglas stresses, rings have the ability to control meaning, directing ambiguity in compensation for the semantic shifts of texts separated from their speakers and contexts; this is accomplished by establishing a pattern of symmetry which builds analogies constraining the meanings of words and deepening them by wordplay.[17] In *Metempsychosis*, these symmetries usually involve intertextual and interdisciplinary effects. Though these effects do not resolve all the hermeneutical challenges of reading the poem, they focus readers on specific ambiguities, controlling their attention.[18]

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[17]Douglas, pp. 13–14.

[18]Because Douglas insists that methodologically "the trick is not to look for matched themes until the formal pairing has been found" (p. 49), I will leave a thematic analysis of the ring structure for later. But a very common theme of ring structures arises from the nature of biblical and genealogical myths in general: the related questions of progress and decay from origins, of Falls and of Redemptions. While, as Douglas points out, the biblical ring-structures' "tracing of the total scheme from beginning to end and the concern for a coherent pattern would correspond to the biblical authors' own preoccupations" (p. 11), the alternative biblical genealogy of *Metempsychosis* confounds providential patterning bringing ends into unfavorable comparisons with beginnings. Snyder's characterization of *Metempsychosis* as a parody of Du Bartas's confident interleaving of biblical and natural history in his *Sepmaines* is very much to the point. Fowler provides a typology of rings' symmetries (see especially chapters 4 and 5), most suggestively associating the form with public triumphs, which often featured symmetric arrangements around a central figure. Appropriately, several critics of *Metempsychosis* have commented on its generic status as "triumph" or "progress" implied by its form and subtitle "The Progresse of the Soule." Perhaps the most useful is Herendeen's discussion of the progress or triumph as a "metamorphic form" involving paradox and doubleness and marking a transition between two forms of existence (pp. 129–130). Herendeen's argument that *Metempsychosis* marks a transition in Donne's poetics from "secular progress" to the "spiritual triumph" of *La Corona*, which it preceded in the early editions of Donne's poetry, finds some support in my argument, as does Fowler's "triumphal" approach to the center, although here it takes satirical form (a perversely repetitive series of fish incarnations). In *Configurations: A Topomorphical Approach to Renaissance Poetry* (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press and New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), Maren-Sofie Røstvig reminds us that "topomorphical" approaches to the composition of Renaissance

While the symmetry of the opening and closing stanzas citing Seth as a transmitter of knowledge is quite overt, the ring structure's extended symmetry is signaled throughout the poem in striking syntactical and emblematic terms by repeated images of doubling, oscillation, and reversal. These, like the poem's retrospections and prolepses, are signs of the cognitive acts required to perceive the structure, and are thematically significant, implying a reading outside of notions of "progress" or decay. One set of examples is the out-of-order description, bringing beginning and end together, of Donne's opening claim that "th'great world to his aged evening, / From infant morn through manly noon I draw" (5–6), the similar claim that "though through many straits and sands I roam, / I launch at paradise, and sail t'wards home" (56–57), and the insistent coupling of ends and beginnings that follows:

> The course I there began shall here be stayed;
> Sails hoisted there strook here, and anchors laid
> In Thames, which were at Tigris and Euphrates weighed.
> (58–60)

The logical chiasm of the last two lines, reversing the order of sails and anchors across two spatio-temporal locales is a particularly striking microcosm of the poem's extended chiastic structure. These statements anticipate Douglas's criterion that the beginning, middle, and end be tightly coupled by language and theme.

A second kind of oscillation, instead representing a mental state of uncertainty, is Siphatecia's response to the ape's caresses:

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poetry, including ring structures, derive mainly from a long tradition of structural exegesis of the Bible which posits such a structure as a principle of unity deriving from divine authorship, mirroring the unity of creation (pp. xi–xii). The contemplation of such a pattern is meant to enable the reader to move from specifics to generalities, from shadows to ideas or patterns. Like Snyder's claims regarding *Metempsychosis*'s parody of Du Bartas, Herendeen's argument that *Metempsychosis* is a palinode, and others' perceptions of *Metempsychosis*'s Spenserian parody, the ring structure of *Metempsychosis* enables readers to appreciate not divine or cosmic unity itself, but the profundity of the disunity of human understandings of the cosmos, particularly their textual articulations.

> She knew not first, now cares not what he doth,
> And willing half and more, more than half loth,
> She neither pulls nor pushes, but outright
> Now cries and now repents. . . .
> (484–487)

This careful suppression of spatial motion by equally ambiguous vocal acts, with the chiastic conflict of willingness and loathing, superimposes this vividly ambivalent sexual desire on the larger spatial, linguistic, and ethical ambiguities of the poem. Quite significantly, the poem's central image similarly combines spatial oscillation and internal hesitation. As Douglas's criteria require, the central fish's watery journey recalls the language of Donne's opening travels through his proximal and remote "native streams" (251) the Thames, Tigris, and Euphrates, and is one of the "many straits" (56) encountered on the journey. Her progress towards the ocean is full of reversals, "oft retarded" (253), and on reaching the sea she hesitates, wavering:

> . . . safe the place she's come unto,
> Where fresh with salt waves meet, and what to do
> She knows not, but between both makes a board or two
> (268–270)

On the way, the fish "two deaths o'erpassed" (261), escaping both a "ravenous pike" (258) and the net. The imagery of doubling and oscillation is intensified here, at the poem's center, to signal the poem's overall structure. Framing this episode on either side are the the fish's ingestions by swan and sea-pie, both themselves examples of doubling, double-containment of the soul inside two bodies.[19] The strange description of the path traced out by the fish's oscillation, "between both makes a board or two," puns on the meaning of "board" as table, and requires a spatial reading, for the fish makes a meal for each bird, only one of which has yet fed. In a more pious poem, this confused temporality might represent a benevolent providence; here, it is an

[19]As Douglas states, "it is common in ring compositions for the mid-turn to be flanked by two sections that are nearly the same" (pp. 55–56). These swallowings certainly qualify.

1	2–4	5–7	8–9	10–11	12	13–14
I sing"; Seth's two pillars	sun's virtue impregnating earth, Noah's "womb" (ark), knot of destiny	epic poet's ambition and "Luther and Mahomet"	incarnation and crucifixion; sin of the forbidden fruit	"man all at once . . . by woman slain"; original sin	heresies corporeally punished	griping serpent severing pipe; mandrake growing in dirt like prince moving through "crowd"
52	49–51	46–48	44–45	42–43	41	39–40
"This sullen writ"; Seth's and Cain's arts	ape-seduction; gestation and birth of Themech	Petrarchan ape's ambition and "beasts and angels"	"riddling lust" of hybrid; wolf-dog exiled	wolf and Abel's bitch; her fraud and child	wolf threatening Abel's flock ("of Church, and kingdoms . . . the first type")	offenseless elephant's trunk; mouse moving in elephant like assassin in "vast house"

Table 1. The ring structure of *Metempsychosis*.

indifferent providence that seems to undermine ideas of priority, causality, and teleology, the idea of a moral directionality to history, under "Fate, which God made, but doth not control" (2).

Taking the landmark of the central fish as a guide, and using the stanzas and soul's embodiments as the demarcations that Douglas's rules require, the ring structure I am proposing is summarized in table 1. Corresponding stanzas or episodes placed symmetrically around the center are placed in the same column of the table; for example, stanzas 5–7 correspond to stanzas 46–48, and stanza 23 corresponds to stanza 30.

There are two caveats for considering this table. First, the episodes often flow into each other, so this is not an absolutely rigid compartmentalization. Second, the correspondences are much more involved than such a brief summary can suggest; I have only identified the most immediately salient points. The breadth of correspondences is vast, establishing a culturally embedded typology of metaphor and antithesis which acts as a set of coordinates for thought. They compare textuality with orality (stanzas 1, 52); three cosmic or temporal processes

15	16	17	18–19	20–22	23	24–25	26
soul as pattern of mandrake's body growing steadily (Aristotelian)	mandrake senselesss; misplaced love	Eve's two drugs, poppy and mandragora, to calm innocent child	sparrow's confinement in egg; betrayal of parents	sparrow's sexual liberty	Overblowing; parchment	haughty swan eats fish	fish's oscillation
38	37	36	34–35	31–33	30	28–29	27
soul's vicissitudes in its houses (Platonic)	the unavenged king; misplaced "love" (duty)	the thresher and sword-fish kill the whale-king who never harmed them	whale's gigantism in body; betrayal by subjects	whale's tyrannical gluttony	wind; calendar	"high" sea pie eats fish	fish's hesitation

with sex and gestation (2–4, 49–51); serious poets with Petrarchan apes (5–7, 46–48); incarnation and original sin with inter-species hybridity (8–9, 44–45, 10–11, 42–43); symbolic/archetypal heresy with contemporary heresy (12, 41); the animal myths and lore of Satanic serpents and offenseless elephants (13–14, 39–40); outdoor crowds with roomy interiors (13–14, 39–40); Aristotelian body-soul relations with Platonic ones (15, 38); the erotic and service senses of "love" (16, 37); drugs with assassins (17, 36); parent-child relations with king-subject relations (18–19, 34–35); sexual liberty with tyrannical gluttony (20–22, 31–33); and positional height with aspirational haughtiness (24–25, 28–29). Constructing this reading is like solving a cryptic crossword; Lina Bolzoni has described similar memory and hermeneutic games in Renaissance Italy.[20] A coterie audience, like that Arthur F. Marotti has

[20]Bolzoni, *The Gallery of Memory: Literary and Iconographic Models in the Age of the Printing Press* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), pp. 83–129. The placing of vivid images engaged in violent and sexual activities into "rooms" or stanzas suggests the techniques of the classical arts of memory. Some of the pairings are constructed around abstract oppositions, suggesting the Renaissance

proposed for Donne's poetry, would certainly find the exercise challenging and amusing; the question is whether there is something more to be gained from it. How deep can these comparisons go, in the sense of Douglas's criterion of "taking the text to deeper levels of analogy"? How do the concepts of intertextuality and interdisciplinarity help? What are the epistemological, ethical, and disciplinary implications?

We can begin by heuristically distinguishing several kinds of comparison. First, some juxtapose competing viewpoints within a given discipline. Stanza 15 describes the mandrake's growth in terms of an Aristotelian soul, the power that forms the body, peacefully slumbering in it, as if in an "inn, built by the guest" (159). Conversely, stanza 38 describes a recently disembodied Platonic soul, "free from prison and passion," yet still possessed of "a little indignation" (372) that its whale-body or "castle" was destroyed. Commonplace paradoxes about the soul's and body's relative powers of mutual disturbance through the medium of the passions are here unsatisfyingly intertwined with this basic philosophical difference regarding the definition of the soul.[21] Second, certain comparisons juxtapose different disciplines or domains of knowledge and test the ability of metaphors to translate between them. Stanza 16's description of the garlanded mandrake as a "young Colossus" (153) idolized for its power to both stir amorous passions and to induce abortion, whose berries might be valued as redder than a lover's lips, corresponds to stanza 37's discussion of the variability of allegiances or "love" in the royal succession or death of princes. Both mandrake and prince can be misloved and misused, and this comparison between "love" in the erotic sense and "love" in the political sense puts stress on the ideas of "natural" affective bonds and their productive or aborted

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influence of the Lullian combinatorial arts on the mnemonic arts. See Paolo Rossi, *Logic and the Art of Memory*, trans. Stephen Clucas (2000; rprt., London: Continuum, 2006); Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (1966; rprt., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974); Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (1990; rprt., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) and *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric and the Making of Images 400–1200* (1998; rprt., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Bolzoni.

[21]The comparison's punning imprecision in the meaning of "indignation" confounds philosophical precision; it may refer to both the subjective feeling of dishonor and dishonor itself.

consequences, in both political and erotic spheres, or in the corporate bodies of lovers and nations.

While these two kinds of comparisons create a general aura of doubt by drawing attention to intra- or inter-disciplinary conflict, a third kind of comparison addresses problems of knowledge more directly. The pairing of stanzas 14 and 40 considers knowledge as a causal or motive power in both nature and politics. Stanza 14's description of the growing mandrake displacing the earth metaphorically sandwiches politics between two different matter theories. The motion of the earth away from the root is explained in terms of natural density, like air moving away from water, in turn compared to an insubstantial crowd making room for a feminine "Prince" of great gravity: "when she comes near / They throng and cleave up, and a passage clear, / As if, for that time, their round bodies flattened were" (138–140).[22] This latter metaphor of a social substance made up of individual corpuscules is highly evocative of an atomic matter theory, but its description of "bodies" being "flattened" is inconsistent with theories that assumed rigid atoms; these compressible bodies, however, are able to account for atomic motion under the traditional assumption of the nonexistence of a vacuum implied by the mandrake's forcing itself "a place, where no place was" (132). As a kind of extended metalepsis, the matched stanza 40 alludes to a different solution, which held that without vacuum any single atomic motion must involve a circular chain of motions of individual rigid atoms, always ending in the space vacated by the original atom. Critics of this theory attacked its seeming imputation of collective and instantaneous knowledge of the proper circular motion to all the atoms involved, behavior similar to the intuitive yielding of the crowd to the Prince, but much better choreographed. Unlike these atoms, the mouse of stanza 40 enters the elephant's brain as an assassin on a suicide mission, free to move as he desires without planning a circular escape route. As the speaker observes, "Who cares not to turn back may any whither come" (400).[23]

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[22]The pun on "cleave," sandwiched in the line between its two meanings of thronging and splitting, draws attention to the different assumptions of the matter theories involved.

[23]While they are common among early modern atomic theorists, most of these arguments about atomic motion can be found in Lucretius's *De Rerum*

By virtue of the metaphors in stanza 14 and the comparison with stanza 40 we must interpret this pair of stanzas with respect to two different disciplines, politics and physics. In terms of matter theory, we obtain two heterodox explanations of atomic motion without vacuum that deny the necessity of sophisticated atomic intelligence while preserving limited atomic agency; atoms that move like the crowd intuitively yield to other atoms by compressing themselves, and atoms that are willing to be destroyed, like the assassin, can act impulsively. In political terms, the comparison mixes royal power and vulnerability, both exaggerating and limiting royal agency; the Queen's safety in a crowded city like London is guaranteed only by the (always hypothetical) knowledge that to attempt assassination would be suicide. In this example, depending on the polarity of the metaphor (atoms for people or people for atoms), or in other terms, the discipline or domain in which we choose to draw the disparate facts and images of the stanzas together, the explanatory value and causal power of knowledge changes completely. In physics positing individual atomic knowledge of consecutive or consequential motion is a conceptual handicap;[24] but in politics, each subject's knowledge of consequences is the only thing maintaining social order.

To generalize before proceeding further, it is clear that all three of these comparisons involve conflicting definitions of bodies, and it is not hard to see that each definition implies different roles for knowledge and different kinds of agency, broadly understood. In the first case, the poem tells us that the soul's "indignation" at losing its castle of the whale is possible despite its loss of bodily passions, usually thought of as the basis of an emotional knowledge dependent on the body and interfering with agency. In the second case, the misused powers of the mandrake, interfering with the passion of love, are described as the power to "kindle" or "kill" the "force of conception" (150). The ambiguous use of "conception" to refer either to pregnancies or ideas is, of course, very common, and recurs throughout the poem. The remaining comparisons

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Natura (*On the Nature of the Universe*, trans. R. E. Latham [1951; rprt., Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1986]).

[24]It might be more technically accurate to describe these physical paradoxes as mixing atomism and Aristotelian physics along the two dimensions of telos and substance.

all juxtapose different kinds of knowledge and agency not only by treating different bodies incarnated by the "great soul" but by using as they do so different disciplinary definitions of bodies.

These comparisons also often consider the powers of textuality to communicate and shape knowledge, to reconcile disciplines, and to constrain interpretation. The central episodes of the two fish swallowed by two birds are particularly explicit treatments of textuality's relationship to embodiment and power. Stanza 23 tropes the first infant fish as an incipient material text: "her scales seemed yet of parchment, and as yet / Perchance a fish, but by no name you could call it." The corresponding stanza 30, concluding the swallowing of the second fish by the sea-pie, advises that "the fish I follow, and keep no calendar / Of t'other [the sea-pie]; he lives yet in some great officer." Here the comparison considers two ways in which bodies-as-texts develop in time, through bodily maturation or inscription on a substrate, or through transmigrations or transmissions that need to be "calendared," or philologically traced.

Regardless of the temporal paradigm, these episodes agree that texts and bodies can be exploited by the powerful. The haughty swan who "moved with state, as if to look upon / Low things it scorned" (236–237) but nevertheless watches and snatches up its victim (stanzas 24–25) and the sea-pie who sees the fish "from high" through the "trait'rous spectacle" (275) of the water (stanzas 28–29) are, compared to the fish, powerful exploiters of their visual superiority, "spectacle" suggesting *reading*. At stake here, as elsewhere in the poem, is the relationship of the senses to knowledge; visual epistemology is relativized in textual terms, as the superior literacy of the birds allows them to cut short the doubtful speculations of the fish.[25] Neither considered solution, complaining and legal remedies, is a possibility. The voiceless fish, "that can to none / Resistance make, nor complaint" are helpless: "Weakness invites, but silence feasts oppression" (248–250). The law, rather than a defensive tool, is one that licenses and mandates their injury: "To kill them is an occupation, / And laws make fasts and Lents for their destruction" (289–290). Read literally this allusion to the establishment of fish days to shore up the English fishing industry hurt by their

[25]The phrase "trait'rous spectacle" can also be taken in two ways: the water betrays both by revealing the fish and by distorting its scale, by being true in its transparency and false in its magnification.

reduction in the Reformation[26] makes these abstract considerations rather bathetically concrete. But in more general terms, language and texts are made "instruments" (280) of oppression aiding those with superior powers of perception, expression (like the sea-pie, "fat gluttony's best orator" [294]), and textual digestion (in the swan's "digestive fires" [243]). That fish here can be read both as victims of texts and as the texts that enable their own oppression, as both "instrument and food" (280), marks the poem's thorough hermeneutical duplicity and reflexivity.

While the bird episodes suggest that even religious texts can be manipulated by the hermeneutics and rhetoric of the powerful, biblical allusions can also deepen a reader's understanding of the examples already discussed. We might wonder whether the Bible can serve, as Donne suggests in the *Essayes*, as an arbiter of the interdisciplinary conflicts the poem poses. The comparison of the mandrake and the ungrateful young prince participates in at least two sets of confused biblical intertexts, the intertwined stories of Absalom and Achitophel (2 Samuel 13–18) and the story of Leah's mandrakes (Genesis 30:14–18). To perceive these intertexts clearly a reader must recombine the two halves of the comparison, but the result is to recontextualize rather than resolve the issue.

Stanza 14 and 16's description of the mandrake as a popular prince to whom the people throng, with long hair and more beautiful than other lovers, when fused with stanza 37's ungrateful prince, becomes a caricature of Absalom. Other echoes of Absalom's story confirm this guess: the mandrake's "leafy garland" (155) suggests Absalom's fate, caught (by his hair?) in a tree, and the revenge in stanza 37 suggests Absalom's revenge on Amnon. An extremely subtle textual confirmation is *Metempsychosis*'s use of the strange word "indignation" (372) in stanza 38. The fates of Absalom and Achitophel were traditionally presumed to be symmetric hangings, but the biblical evidence that Absalom was hung by his hair and that Achitophel hanged himself is doubtful. While Thomas Browne concedes Absalom's being "hanged by the haire of the head," he cites Grotius's argument that the Hebrew word that is taken to mean that Achitophel strangled himself, *chanaq,* which appears only twice in the Old Testament, "not only signifies suspension, but

[26]Robbins, p. 446 n. 290.

indignation."[27] Besides conspicuously using the word, Donne shows himself aware of this lexical problem by referring to its etymological Hebrew meaning, "to be narrow," when he describes the soul's new "strait cloister" (375) in the mouse.[28] Thus, simultaneously with Absalom's story, the corresponding stanzas allow us to piece together Achitophel's flight from Jerusalem, or "so great a castle" (374), to his family home, an "inn, built by the guest" (160), which in *Metempsychosis* becomes a simultaneous narrowing of prestige (or "indignation"), domicile, and body.

Considering the failed ambitions of the would-be-king Absalom and the counselor Achitophel, we might think of one of Job's lamentations: "For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest, / With kings and counselors of the earth, which build desolate places for themselves" (Job 3:13–14). The meaning of the phrase "build desolate places for themselves" was also debated, either deriding kings and counselors' sterile failed ambitions, or proving their power over nature by building in wastelands, like the prince-mandrake that, "to itself did force / A place, were no place was" (131–132) in the dirt. Stanza 16 again paraphrases Job's lamentation slightly differently:

> So, of a lone unhaunted place possessed,
> Did this soul's second inn, built by the guest
> This living buried man, this quiet mandrake, rest.
> (158–160)

The elided part of Job's lamentation, his self-comparison to "kings and counselors," is a metaleptic clue to the story of Absalom and Achitophel that bridges the comparison. Just as the comparison of the mandrake-prince and mouse-assassin did for paradoxes of atomic motion, this peculiarly intertextual biblical allusion permits the underlying comparison of Platonic and Aristotelian body-soul relations to be interpreted in political terms, here whether the body-politic can survive a change of kings or counselors, often troped as the souls or faculties of a kingdom,

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[27]Browne, *Pseudodoxia epidemica*, ed. Robin Robbins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 569.

[28]"Dictionary and Word Search for *chanaq (Strong's 2614),*" *Blue Letter Bible*, 1996–2012 <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H2614&t=KJV> accessed 21 May 2012.

and whether counselors and princes can survive the change themselves. The comparison in this sense wonders where the power of forming the body-*politic* lies.

When the emphasis is shifted slightly from prince to mandrake, the concerns of the poem seem to shift from affairs of state to affairs of sex. The identification of prince with mandrake is not arbitrary, but echoes David's request in Psalm 144, traditionally considered to be written after his victory over Absalom, "that our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth" (Psalsms 144:12). This phrase, obscurely combining youth and maturity, activity and passivity, may have sprouted as the mandrake's pubic hair, grown on the first day of its incarnation to signify its potency, and David's preceding request, "Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity" (Psalms 144:11), may have conjured the mandrake's abortifacient powers and its "mouth, but dumb" (151). The mandrake's silence can replace mouthy children, but only if it is used to prevent the children's existence; but if the mandrake is taken as prince, Absalom did rid David of the troublesome Amnon. We might also compare David's request to Job's desire never to have been born. For the lusty David abstinence and contraception were not options; neither was abortion, a measure that would have prevented the murder of Uriah that, according to Nathan's prophecy, led to Absalom's rebellion. From this point of view it is ironic that, as punishment, David's first child with Bathsheba died.[29] But the responsibility for family planning seems in the Bible to have fallen on equally lusty women.

The phrasing of Donne's acknowledgement of this fact, that "no lustfull woman came this plant to grieve / But t'was because there was none yet but Eve" (161–162) begs a reader to consider the appearances of mandrakes in the Bible. Like "indignation," there are only two. One is a biblical locus of debates about conception, the story of Leah's mandrake, traded to Rachel in exchange for a night with Jacob (Genesis 30:14–18). Considering the story, Thomas Browne, sceptical of both the mandrake's

[29]David's attitudes to his children are famously complicated. The most polarized reactions are his stoicism after the death of his first child with Bathsheba and his mourning after the death of Absalom (and chastisement by Joab for political reasons). Compare stanza 37: "Some kings by vice being grown / So needy of subjects love, that of their own / They think they lose, if love be to the dead Prince shown."

conceptive and contraceptive powers, pointed out that if the fecundation powers of mandrakes are implied, Rachel's trading of a night with Jacob for the mandrakes seems inconsistent; both mandrake and man are necessary for conception.[30] And why would Leah grant Rachel the mandrake if it would help her conceive? Possibly Leah thought it would do the opposite. An alternative explanation, that Rachel wanted the mandrake because of its delightful fruit and smell, is suggested by the Song of Solomon (7:13). Donne's claim that the mandrake is "enchased with little fruits, so red and bright / That for them you would call your loves lips white" (156–157), with its pun on "chaste," captures both the sense of Leah's fruit-for-lover exchange and the fruit-blazon effect of the surrounding section of the Song of Solomon (breasts like a cluster of grapes, etc.) More generally these allusions deepen the poem's broader engagement with the paradoxes of biblical attitudes towards sexuality. The context in Genesis, Rachel and Leah's jealousy of each other's sons, forms an inversely gendered counterpart to the sibling rivalries among princes in the story of Absalom. Cynically read, sons' rivalries are balanced by mothers' rivalries in polygamous marriages, and mothers' abortions are balanced by fathers' murders of sons.

One can, I think, read the mandrake stanzas and their ring-structure counterparts describing the death of the whale as a scrambled digest of 2 Samuel's description of David's reign. By focusing on the problem of succession, these stanzas intertwine affairs of state and affairs of sex in a manner graphically detailed by this, the most realistically political and succession-focused book of the Bible. The allusions have a lapidary precision, generally focusing on cruxes like "indignation" or the mandrake, obscure words or phrases on which commentators are split, and which require detailed intertextual readings of Scripture to understand.[31] One example is stanza 16's description of the mandrake:

> A mouth, but dumb, he hath; blind eyes, deaf ears,
> . . . . . .
> A young Colossus there he stands upright,

[30]Browne, *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* 7.7, pp. 553–557.

[31]For this paragraph I have used easily accessible contemporary commentaries, but there is no reason to believe that Donne could not access similar interpretations. For example, the Geneva Bible's marginal note interprets the "blind and lame" of the Jerusalem conquest, discussed below, as idols.

> And as that ground by him were conquered
> A leafy garland wears he on his head
> Enchased with little fruits, so red and bright. . . .
> (151, 153–156)

The allusion to the "Colossus" of Rhodes here is hard to fathom, though its commemoration of a failed siege in the battles among Alexander's successor generals suggests the prominence of generals (or "counselors") in the wars of succession in the book of Samuel. Stanza 38's description of the whale, "so great a castle" "down beat," suggests we consider successful sieges in which "ground . . . [was] conquered" (153). There are only two in Samuel, though in neither case did David do the conquering himself.[32] The rather perfunctory description of David's conquest of Jerusalem by sending soldiers through the water tunnel or "conduit pipe" (122) contains the obscure taunt of the Jebusites: "Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither" (2 Samuel 5:6). Interpreters suggested that the Jebusites were so confident that they claimed they could have defended their city with the blind and lame, or alternatively that the "blind and lame" threw back in their face the Israelite's perjorative description of their idols, often placed on their city walls—like the Colossus, an idol of Helios. Like these idols, the mandrake-Colossus is blind, deaf, and dumb (151).[33] As line 154 implies, Absalom didn't conquer Jerusalem either, but entered it after David abandoned it. Similarly, David's victory over the Ammonite city of Rabba (2 Samuel 12), the siege crucially spanning the story of Bathsheba, is a victory earned by his "counselor" the general Joab and claimed by David only in name (2 Samuel 12:26–29). Here David claims a crown, the only crown in the historical books of the Bible to feature "enchased" (156) jewels. The Hebrew word *malcam* (2 Samuel 12:30), usually translated to suggest the crown came off the king's (*melech*) head, may also mean that the crown came off the head of an idol of *Molech*, another "Colossus." In any case, the victory over Rabba is immediately preceded by the birth of Solomon, the inheritor of the crown and author of the

[32]David's conquest of "Methegammah" (2 Samuel 8:1) is the exception that proves the rule; commentators are split on whether it was a city, a fortress, or merely a strategic hilltop.

[33]Rachel's use of the mandrake is also a kind of idolatry, as she turns to it rather than God (to whom Jacob clearly directs her) for help in conception.

inspiration for the next line, "that for them you would call your love's lips white" (157).[34] There are more allusions to the book of Samuel in these stanzas and elsewhere in the poem, if only because it is the richest description of court politics in the Bible.[35]

Most critics who have mentioned gender in the poem stress its culmination in the misogynistic outburst against Themech who "knew treachery, / Rapine, deceit, and lust, and ills enow / To be a woman" (507–509). But as the discussion of succession through the mandrake shows, read as a ring the poem is relatively even-handed in its gender critique, especially in regard to sexual ethics. The central section treating fish is a particularly interesting example because, in an extended pattern of biblical allusion, it engages the laws regarding rape and marriage in Deuteronomy 22.

This pattern of allusion begins with the sparrow, the incarnation between mandrake and first fish. The sparrow's coupling is explicitly incestuous; his mates may include "his sister, or his niece" (195), just as "men, till they took laws which made freedom less / Their daughters, and their sisters did ingress" (201–202). The repeated "sister," given the allusions to Absalom and the proleptic comparison to men, evokes Amnon's incestuous rape of Tamar. Though the sparrow escapes unpunished, the later invention of bird-trapping "with feigned calls, hid nets, or enwrapping snare" (214) suggests Absalom's delayed ambush of Amnon two years later. Though it leaves many offspring, Donne's description of the dead sparrow as a "coal with overblowing quench'd and dead" (221), echoes the woman of Tekoah's argument for Absalom's amnesty:

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[34]Perhaps in turn implying the sacrifice of lovers for the crown; David's loss of Jonathan comes to mind, though the logic of sacrifice isn't quite accurate.

[35]Two examples: (1) The thresher and swordfish who assassinate the whale, "two little fishes whom he never harmed / nor fed on their kind" (341) are through the ring paired with the "death" of the mandrake "as a slumb'rer stretching on his bed" (144), suggesting the assassination of Ishbosheth by his tribesmen Rechab and Banaah in his sleep (2 Samuel 4). (2) Stanza 38's statement that "basest men that have not what to eate, / Nor enjoy ought, do far more hate the great / Then they, who good repos'd estates possess" suggests the different responses of the Benjamites Mephibosheth (to whom David "repos'd," repossessed, or restored Saul's estates) and the dispossessed Shimei to David's flight from Jerusalem.

> Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy the heir also: and so they shall quench my coal which is left, and shall not leave to my husband neither name nor remainder upon the earth.
>
> (2 Samuel 14:7)

These allusions to the rape of Tamar prepare a reader for the Deuteronomical treatment of rape that follows, scattered throughout the stanzas treating the central fish. Stanza 29 is the most explicit when it asks, "Is any kind subject to rape like fish?" Though the meaning is not uniquely sexual, with the bawdy connotations of the word *fish* (here either genitals or women viewed sexually) this sense resonates through the surrounding stanzas. The fish's silence is one reason for its victimization: "he that can to none / Resistance make, nor complaint, sure is gone. / Weakness invites, but silence feasts oppression" (248–250). Deuteronomy similarly makes a woman's cry for help the legal criterion of rape (22:22–29). If a betrothed virgin is violated[36] in a city, both victim and assailant are to be stoned because consent is assumed; cries for help would have been heard, and the rape prevented. In the country, where cries are assumed made but not heard, only the assailant is punished. The ape seduction of Siphatecia lays similar stress on crying: "She neither pulls nor pushes, but outright / Now cries, and now repents" (486–487). Here what might be considered a rape by Deuteronomical law (but is much more ambiguous in Siphatecia's mind) leads to the immediate murder of the ape by Siphatecia's brother, Tethlemite, who, hearing her cries and entering her tent, "a great stone threw" (488), intuitively and probably erroneously applying the Deuteronomical punishment.[37]

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[36]Violation here refers not to the woman's lack of consent, but instead to her betrothed's or father's. The point is that the sexual partner or assailant is not the betrothed.

[37]It is an incorrect punishment because the ape was "prevented" and Siphatechia was "half and more" willing—though her marital status is unknown. If we quibble to the degree this quantification invites, the seduction might be better considered under the bestiality laws of Leviticus 18 and 20, which, however, do not allow for nonconsenting humans.

While the stoning penalty applied only to betrothed virgins and adulterers, rapists of the unattached had to pay a bride-price and marry them, with no possibility of divorce.[38] Though this law presumably granted the victims some power and livelihood, *Metempsychosis* seems to view these unions' unhappy sixteenth-century equivalents, involving both young and mature fish-women and their dowries (not bride-prices!), as fatal for both parties despite husbands' short-term gain. The sea-pie, abductor, rapist, or husband of the second fish, who "bears her away" "exalting" her "but to the exalters good" (277–278), is blown out to sea by "a sudden stiff land-wind" (291), until "tired he lies / and with his prey, that till then languished, dies" (296–297). The sexual double-entendres on lying and dying recall the corresponding stanza 23, which began the fish sequence. There, the lusty sparrow, the "coal with overblowing quench'd and dead" is like the sea-pie destroyed by his lust. A better system of sexual arrangements may be the casual, noncommittal, contactless copulation of actual fish. A naturalistic description of fish-sex bulks out this stanza, with violent wind and blowing replaced by leavening: "A female fish's sandy roe / With the male's jelly newly leavened was, / For they had intertouched as they did pass" (223–225). Thomas Browne doubted the common claim that women could similarly be impregnated by free-floating semen in baths; perhaps it was invoked to explain mysterious pregnancies, and to avoid forced marriages.[39] One overall effect of this part of the poem is to question the legitimacy of sexual and marital relations in which consent is just as influenced by power and financial and social constraints as by the sometimes unwelcome passions; through its anachronistic prolepses and naturalistic images, the poem implicitly casts the categorical distinctions made by biblical laws on the subject as culturally dependent and psychologically and scientifically uninformed, if not hopelessly out-of-date.[40]

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[38]The phrasing and context of this law (Deuteronomy 22:28) may not imply rape, since it qualifies that the two are "discovered," implying that no screaming was involved. Nevertheless, it prescribes marriage once virginity is compromised, despite the lack of prior betrothal.

[39]Browne, p. 586. This idea evokes Donne's description in *Sappho to Philaenis* (41–42) of lesbian sex being like fish sex in that it leaves no traces.

[40]Donne may, however, have been sympathetic to the advantages of a bride-price system over a dowry system. The later episode of Abel's bitch roughly "embraced" by a wolf but who offers no resistance or barking, and who is then

My analysis so far has shown how each incarnation deepens the meaning of the ring structure by using biblical intertexts, often extended over several stanzas, to mediate between a variety of disciplinary or discursive registers, including natural history and natural philosophy, political and moral philosophy, and sexual and legal systems of power. These disciplines are always conceived dually as defining different kinds of bodies and different forms of knowledge and agency. But the poem's treatment of the Bible is rarely unquestioning, as its engagement with biblical laws of rape and marriage reveals. I will next analyze in depth two sets of paired transmigrations which use similar interdisciplinary and intertextual methods to deepen *Metempsychosis*'s theological paradoxy, the first centered on the comparison of the sparrow and the whale as Judeo-Christian symbols of divinity, and the second centered on the Christian concepts of the Fall, original sin, and incarnation. I will conclude by showing how the final sequence of comparisons, that of the opening epic invocation with the closing ape-seduction and gestation of Themech, may be useful for placing *Metempsychosis* in an immediate historical context of state censorship, clarifying the meaning of the ring structure's hermeneutical acrobatics.

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In the poem's description of the fertilization of fish eggs, the unrestrained seminal secretions of the libertine sparrow survive the transmigratory gap to be poetically reborn as the fish's "male jelly." This persistent image is especially indecorous because it bounds the comparison of the sparrow and the whale, animals with rich theological significations. The most obviously paradoxical symbolism associates the sparrow with the benevolent providence watching over the apostles (Matthew 10:29 and Luke 12:6), and the whale with the Leviathan, emblem in the book of Job and elsewhere for the incomprehensible and terrible power of God. Ann Blair has observed that the strategies these

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deemed to be "engag'd" (421) to him seems fully aware of these Deuteronomical laws. There, as elsewhere in the poem, a key word marking questions of agency and compulsion is "strait." For a relevant discussion of Donne's poetic interest in English laws of rape and marriage, see Arthur Lindley, "John Donne, 'Batter my Heart,' and English Rape Law," *John Donne Journal* 17 (1998): 75–88.

symbols represent, emphasizing divine providence and divine prodigies, were commonly used by sixteenth-century authors of natural theologies and *histoires prodigieuses*.[41] Given Donne's objections to Sebond in his *Essayes*, we should expect Donne's use of these symbols in *Metempsychosis* to undermine the arguments of natural theologians and theorists of natural law. If the God of the providential sparrow acts through the all-pervading Holy Spirit, the ubiquitous biological spirit of *Metempsychosis*'s sparrow is a troubling material counterpart, a double-nexus of human and divine agency, of knowledge-bearing sentience and dull matter. Dually conceived as the material of paternal heredity and vehicle of revelation, the spirit is also used to question directly the prodigial and patriarchal authority of biblical sexual laws.

While the interactions of birds and fish treat the war between genders and classes, the comparison of sparrow and whale juxtaposes opposite ends of the public-private polarity, kings and lovers, and treats the moral dilemmas of public and private life. As in Donne's love poetry, solipsism and worldliness are paired ambivalently. The whale's public behavior, a gluttonous tyranny, is in some ways more selfish than the sparrow's private behavior, a merely self-destructive libertinism. Whereas for the whale's sake, a "thousand guiltless smalls to make one great must die" (330) by feeding him, the sparrow chooses rather "pleasantly three, than, straitened, twenty years / To live, and to increase his race, himself outwears," copulating to his own death. The ejaculative generosity of the sparrow, who "freely on his she-friends . . . blood and spirit, pith and marrow, spends" (209) may be compared to the whale's wasteful and showy spouting "rivers up, as if he meant / To join our seas with seas above the firmament" (319–320); we thus compare the social effects of the sparrow's sexual ambition and the whale's world-dominating pretensions.

These aspirations are qualified in two major ways. First, the whale's tyranny and the sparrow's libertinism are described as manifestations of bodily intemperance. In the sparrow's case, the body is a too-soft and exclusively fluid one, made of "blood and spirit, pith and marrow" (209) which when spent "slack'neth so the soul's and body's knot / Which temperance straitens" (207–208). In the whale's case, the body is a too-rigid fortress, whose "ribs are pillars, and his high-arched roof / Of bark

[41]Blair, pp. 14–18.

that blunts best steel, is thunder-proof" (314–315), but which is ultimately a hollow shell of skin and bones, vulnerable to eventual piercing by a swordfish to founder like a ship. Like the comparison of the mandrake-prince and mouse-assassin, this juxtaposition of body types suggests ambiguities in the location of intemperance at the nexus of corporeality and sentient agency. For example, Lucretius discusses the belief that sentience arises from soft bodies of flesh, sinews and veins, like the sparrow's, but argues that sentience is a finer substance that can through blows be dislodged from a body, however rigid like the whale's, over a lifetime causing aging.[42] Combining these theories, the deaths of sparrow and whale are due to intertwined physiological and moral causes: the sparrow's lust causes his bodily dissolution through his loss of spirit, while the whale's tyranny combines with his aged vulnerability in his assassination.

Second, the poem stresses the weakness and eventual vulnerability of the sparrow outside his species while stressing the temporary strength and indiscriminateness of the whale. Unlike Rachel's putative use of the mandrake, "man to beget, and woman to conceive / Asked not of roots, nor of cock-sparrows, leave" (217–218); due to his impotence with respect to humanity, the sparrow is, for now, free of human predation. But eventually humans will trap "the free inhab'tants of the pliant air" (215) using "bird-lime . . . feigned calls, hid nets, or enwrapping snare" (213–214), just as the whale "hunts not fish, but, as an officer, / Stays in his court, at his own net, and there / All suitors of all sorts themselves enthrall" (321–323). These parallel entrapments are temporally displaced, but for now no one seems unwilling; the sparrow "chooseth" (219) to live a short pleasant and lusty life, like the small fish or "suitors" who choose to dwell at court though the whale indiscriminately "sucks everything / That passeth near. . . . / Flyer and follower, in this whirlpool fall" (325–327). If there is any sense of justice or plan in the fate of sparrow, whale, or suitors, it is concealed by shifting scales of time, consequence, and power.[43]

These qualifications therefore raise questions of moral responsibility, of justice, and of causation, expressed in both political and corporeal

[42]Lucretius, pp. 86–88, 94.

[43]The overlapping story of Absalom and Amnon, where family politics play a complicating role, contains similar ambiguities of justice.

terms. Unlike the comparison of mandrake-prince and mouse-assassin, these questions can only partly be addressed by theories of matter and politics, and invite the theological concepts of providence, election, and free will. The Holy Spirit is the ghost in the machine of biblical intertextuality distilling these concepts from the secular disciplines involved.

Stanza 33 alludes to the story of the Exodus, partly through the typological association of the Egyptian Pharoah with the Leviathan.[44] One problem with this allusion is the claim that "fish chaseth fish, and all / Flyer and follower, in this whirlpool fall" (326–327), an inaccurate description of the selective drowning in the Red Sea only of Egyptian "followers," and not Israelite "flyers."[45] But if the whale is read as the Leviathan of the book of Job, emblematic of the incomprehensible power and justice of the Old Testament deity, the line better describes the slaying of both Egyptian and Israelite children, "guiltless smalls" (330). This guess is confirmed by the whale's behavior: "He drinks up seas, and he eats up flocks" (341), evoking both the fiery destruction of Job's flocks (Job 1:16) and the Behemoth who drinks up rivers (Job 40:23). Donne is again quite careful to acknowledge the biblical polyvalence of the

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[44]The whale

> . . . in his gulf-like throat, sucks everything
> That passeth near. Fish chaseth fish, and all,
> Flyer and follower, in this whirlpool fall:
> O might not states of more equality
> Consist? And is it of necessity
> That thousand guiltless smalls, to make one great, must die?
> (325–330)

The phrase "passeth near" suggests "passover" (as does the earlier description of the central fish, who "two deaths *orepast*" [261]), and the imagery of chaos in the water might suggest the drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea. The term "passover" itself refers to the sparing of the Israelite first-borns during the murder by the angel of death of the Egyptian first-borns; this sacrifice of "guiltless smalls" was retribution for Pharoah's decreed drowning of the Israelites' infant sons. Passover celebrates the Exodus of the Israelites from slavery—to a state perhaps "of more equality."

[45]We can alternatively interpret "flyer" and "follower" as measuring adherence to God; either way the line is incompatible with the events at the Red Sea.

Leviathan when he asserts that the whale's assassins "did not eat / His flesh, nor suck those oils, which thence outstreat" (344–345), despite the addition of naturalistic "oils" echoing Psalm 74's praise of God's feeding Israel the spoils of Egypt: "Thou brakest the heads of Leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness." The assassins are not the beneficiaries of divine election, but the ends and agents of God's power in the Old Testament are often unclear. For example, Ezekiel 29 combines Psalm 74's image of the Pharoah as aquatic "dragon," with Job's image of a Leviathan hooked by the jaw; but in Ezekiel the beneficiaries of God's power and inheritors of Egypt are the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar. These allusions assign overwhelming and incomprehensible power to God, even the power of Israel's oppressors, while acknowledging the perplexities of providence through the polyvalence of the symbolism.

Set against this Old Testament picture of immense power is what at first seems a trivial comparison, the sparrow. Its most memorable appearance in the Bible is Jesus's claim that the apostles during their preaching will be valued by God more than sparrows, whose fate is carefully monitored despite their insignificance: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father" (Matthew 10:29). The whale stanzas contain a similar apparently generous act of providence, the "swallowed Dolphins" (316), traditional emblems of believers in Christ, who swim in the whale "without fear" (316), mixing characteristics of the apostles and, of course, Jonah. But these acts of providence should not be overestimated. Sparrows still die by the masses in human traps, as stanza 22 reminds us, and Jesus's parable never claims that providence will prevent worldly violence or human aggression.[46] Moreover, Jesus's own language is far from purely benevolent, his goal being apparently to destroy or confuse the material and legal relationships of nations and families, in a way suggestive of the whale's violence, tyranny, and betrayal, and the anti-genealogical motifs running through the poem:

[46]Though Jesus says "fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28), hell is definitively absent from a transmigratory poem where souls are endlessly reincarnated, and which repeatedly confounds any clear idea of body-soul relations.

> Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.
>
> (Matthew 10:34–37)

Following this pattern, the infant sparrow in *Metempsychosis* fed by his father will "within a moneth, . . . beate him from his hen" (190).[47]

The vagaries of familial and political coherences encapsulated by these intertexts are usually explained in Christianity by the concept of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament the spirit moves between nations with the whims of divine election, and in the New Testament, spiritual bonds replace biological bonds. In both cases the spirit can act through individuals, and knowing when it is present and when it moves is crucial. *Metempsychosis* describes the spirit's inhabitation of the sparrow and whale in detailed physiological terms that predicate institutional coherence on bodily coherence. While the soul in the sparrow is "confined and enjailed . . . into a small blue shell" (177–178) but after birth extrudes feathers "as children's teeth through gums" (183), the soul reigns in the kingdom of the whale's body "like a prince . . . [and] sends her faculties / To all her limbs, distant as provinces" (334–335), but after death its internal oil spills. These contrasting versions of spatial containment mixing birth and death are confused by vaguely defined boundaries between living parts of bodies and nonliving feathers, teeth, and oil. Unlike the sensitive spirit on which life depends, these parts are nonsensitive and exist beyond the lifespan of their generating bodies. We might think of these body parts, like the sparrow's ejaculations, or like the whale's spout joining the waters below and above the firmament like the divine breath before their partition in Genesis, as troubling the physiological and temporal boundaries of spiritual possession. These physiological problems prompt additional questions that Donne explores through biblical intertexts: When is a nation (or its parts) truly elect, a

[47]Like Absalom, who on taking Jerusalem publicly sleeps with David's concubines, as Nathan prophesied.

prophet truly inspired, a person or animal (or its parts) truly free or sentient?

One set of intertexts emphasizes the shifting boundaries of the national body of the elect nation that are superimposed on the mortalities of whale and sparrow. Stanza 34's description of the whale's kingly rule in its body after its growth, qualified by the conclusion "there's no pause at perfection / Greatness a period hath, but hath no station" (339–340), echoes Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great tree[48] chopped down and consumed by beasts:

> It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth.
>
> (Daniel 4:22)

God's control over political history is, of course, the main theme of the book of Daniel, which treats the succession of the Persian empire to the Babylonian.[49] We might also consider the sparrows of the Old Testament, symbols of easily finding a home near God's altar (Psalms 84:3), of a curse which cannot land on the undeserving (Proverbs 26:2), or of Israel coming from Egypt to find a home (Hosea 11:11);[50] all represent historical processes of divine justice and election. Despite their contrast in size, both sparrow and whale have brief zeniths. To

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[48]Note the use of the potentially arboreal terms "bark" (315) and "pith" (209) to describe the whale and sparrow.

[49]Not coincidentally, Daniel's interpretation of the dream includes what is often interpreted as Nebuchadnezzar's seven-fold reincarnation as a beast:

> they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.
>
> (Daniel 4:25)

[50]Translation is of course an issue when attempting to identify specific biblical animals. In the case of a sparrow, in the Hebrew Bible the word *tsippor* is usually used to refer to any small bird. Greek and Latin translations of the word vary.

emphasize the temporariness of his election, the whale is killed by a "flail-finned thresher" (351); typical of the poem's polyvalent use of natural symbols, the symbolic scourge of God is killed by a slightly more literal animal "scourge."

The theological aporia between a protective God and a vengeful scourging one is in *Metempsychosis* intertwined with personal and political ethics: libertines tend to have providential attitudes and tyrants tend to have prodigial ones. One authorization for tyranny, contemporary ideas of divine-right kingship, is undermined by the poem's recognition of the uncertainty of divine interference in kingly reigns. Because libertinism and tyranny are both examples of legal vacuums,[51] the poem's establishment of Hobbesian natural paradigms for them also undermines theories of natural law. Between libertinism and tyranny lies the exercise of free will and the gray shades of positive law, compulsion, persuasion, and instruction. *Metempsychosis* reminds us that the Holy Spirit complicates these debates. The sparrow's egress from its shell as it "kicked, and pecked itself a door" (180) audibly echoes Paul's chastisement for "kicking against the pricks" of the Spirit (Acts 9:5)[52]; the sparrow also kicks against his mother, the Spirit-like "warm bird o'erspread" (179). In the Old Testament, Jonah, like Paul, was a reluctant prophet, and the whale a tool of divine agency overcoming his resistance. The experiences of Paul and Jonah reveal that there are limits to resisting the Spirit. The sparrow's escape from the shell where "firm destiny / Confined and enjailed her that seemed so free" (176–177) is an uncertain reclamation of freedom.

The Spirit's role in granting language is also viewed ambivalently. The sparrow, despite its rejection of his Spirit-like mother, in the "first hour speaks plain" (186) and can ask (by chirping) for meat, like the apostles who will know, by the Spirit, what to testify to governors and kings:

[51]Through the mandrake-prince Absalom and Achitophel, the poem treats the middle ground of rebellious courtiers and princes under David's mostly-legitimate monarchical rule.

[52]In some texts the spelling of "pecked" is "pick't," making the echo more audible.

> But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.
>
> (Matthew 10:19)

This allusion deepens the parallel between sparrows betraying their fathers and subjects betraying tyrant whales in stanza 35; the swordfish and thresher's *lack* of speech guarantees that their unspoken conspiracy cannot be overheard and betrayed.[53] Whereas the central episodes of birds and fish emphasized the ability of the powerful to oppress by language, language in these episodes reveals the power of the weak, either to beg, or to act silently, without any need of the spirit. [54]

The instruction of the Holy Spirit poses ethical and political problems perhaps most salient in the spiritualist sects who raised the Spirit above the laws of both God and man; like the libertine sparrow before the advent of "laws which made freedom less" (201), they were accused of both antinomianism and sexual transgressions. But even before the new dispensation of the Spirit, Old Testament kings overruled the laws of sexual morality. The poem's stress on three kinds of incest, that of men with their sisters, nieces, and daughters (196, 202), seems to allude to biblical law's strange silence on incest with daughters and nieces, despite its clear prohibition of incest with sisters and half-sisters (Deuteronomy 27, Leviticus 18 and 20). Tamar's apparent belief when confronted by Amnon that the only crime at issue was rape is therefore perplexing. Though "man to beget, and woman to conceive / Asked not of rootes,

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[53]Neither the betrayal of the sparrow's father nor the overthrowing of a tyrant, if "wise," is unambivalent. As the conlusion of stanza 35 puts it:

> How shall a tyran wise strong projects break,
> If wretches can on them the common anger wreak?"
>
> (349–350)

The pun on "break," meaning both to begin and destroy, encapsulates the ambivalence of the advent of new orders, whether generational, political, or religious.

[54]Counselors can also advise on the proper terms of address to kings. Like the sparrow asking for "meat," Jonadab advises Amnon to feign sickness and ask David to send Tamar to him with food as the occasion for the rape (2 Samuel 13). Joab puts words in the mouth of the woman of Tekoah (2 Samuel 14:3).

nor of cock-sparrows, leave" (216–217), according to Tamar, Amnon should simply have asked for David's permission (2 Samuel 13:13). Judging by David's adultery, Tamar's assumption of his cavalier attitude to sexual law may have been justified. But legitimacy in overriding laws may depend on the ability to guarantee them. Though the responses of kings and gods are hard to predict, the less-threatening substitutes of mandrake and husband were ineffective for Rachel. Genesis 30 carefully attributes all power of conception to God, making him better authorized to regulate sex than his impotent kingly surrogates. Providence confuses things further: it was David's infidelity with Bathsheba that (according to Nathan) brought about the violations (Amnon's rape of Tamar, Absalom's rebellion, and Adonijah's similar one) leading to the succession of Bathsheba and David's second son Solomon. In sum, if the Bible itself is so conflicted about patriarchal law's right to regulate sex, why not just follow the Spirit? While the incest law applies only to "*men* [who] took laws which made freedom less," this freedom applies equally to men and women: "both liberty do use, / Where store is of both kinds, both kinds may freely choose" (210). The caveat of sufficient supply, by recognizing the shortage of brides in a polygamous society, consigns biblical law to the patriarchal culture it emerged from.[55]

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[55]Thinking about biblical antinomianism may explain the leap from mandrake to sparrow. Discussing the sparrow, Jesus claims that each hair on the apostles' heads is numbered, recycling the book of Samuel's habit of promising security by claiming that not a single hair on one's head will touch the ground. In 1 Samuel 14, this expression is used by the mob to save Jonathan from Saul's ill-conceived oaths, and in 2 Samuel David guarantees Absalom's safety to the woman of Tekoah in these terms. When Absalom's immense head of hair is thereafter described, we know a dramatic irony is looming; Absalom's death by hanging in the tree preserves the letter of David's promise. In the case of Jonathan the mob overruled Saul's oath by citing divine mercy; in the case of Absalom, fate reinterpreted David's oath to guarantee divine justice. In either case kings' intentions fail in practice. The wiser Solomon adds a proviso to his use of the same oath to Adonijah, an Absalom-type (1 Kings 1:52). With these intertexts in mind, the meaning of Jesus's promise is particularly suspect, and his subsequent description of war between fathers and sons (like David and Absalom, or Saul and Jonathan) is more understandable.

Whereas the sparrow and whale episodes locate moral agency in the obscure activity of the spirit, the comparison of serpent and elephant locates it at the passive nexus of body and senses.[56] Though this comparison is superficially the most morally polarized one in the poem, its moral distinctions falter on epistemic grounds. The serpent is, of course, one cause of the Fall and associated in Christian thought with Satan, while the elephant was represented in Renaissance and classical natural histories as a religious creature; it is "just and thankful" (384), and "the only harmless great thing" (382). At first glance the serpent in the poem is, as conventionally, entirely guilty, and the elephant, entirely innocent.

The first complication comes from the serpent's and elephant's body-types. Between praising the elephant as deferential, "loth to offend" and claiming that "himself he up-props, on himself relies / and foe to none, suspects no enemies" the narrator inserts the parenthetical aside "(Yet nature hath given him no knees to bend)" (384–386). This is an obvious perversity, debunked even by Pliny,[57] but its import is its ambiguous placement in the stanza. Qualifying its deferentiality, the elephant's natural rigidity is a handicap, but qualifying its upstanding neutrality, it removes even the possibility of immoral action, or figuratively, coming down to earth. The serpent's limbless sinuosity and its punishment for its role in the Fall, crawling on its belly on the dirt, are implied by the comparison. If the serpent's post-lapsarian posture was divine punishment, why is the elephant's posture ascribed to "nature"? Was the serpent punished for his God-given sinuosity, a moral complexity elephants are blessedly denied? Combining moral and corporeal terms, the comparison of serpent and elephant anatomy works similarly to that of the fluid sparrow and the rigid whale. But the natural bodies of serpent and elephant are also subject to foreign invasion and

[56]While neither serpent nor elephant are incarnations of the "great soul," but respectively a victimizer of it (via the apple) and victim of it (via the mouse), they play a structural role similar to the two central birds who swallow the central fish.

[57]Robbins cites Pliny's, Aristotle's, and Bartholomaeus Anglicus's debunkings of this myth, and observes the contemporary presence of elephants in London who quite obviously had knees, for example those in Donne's *Satyre I* (p. 451 n. 385).

manipulation; the elephant by the mouse, and the serpent, according to Christian tradition, by Satan.

These invasions, the mouse's attacking the elephant's brain and Satan's traditionally assumed manipulation of the serpent's fantasy, pose the general question of how sin enters the mind. The serpent was manipulated through his imagination, the site of dreams and sensory experience. Conversely, the elephant "still sleeping stood; [while] vexed not his fantasy / black dreams" (388–389), never facing the moral challenges of either an unruly imagination or a flexible body. The sinuousness of the serpent was considered to signify its subtle powers of linguistic manipulation. But if the serpent itself could be so easily manipulated, then it was not an independent moral agent, but a mere "conduit-pipe" (122) of evil into the world. In an ironic act of natural mimicry, the entry-point of the mouse into the elephant is not his senses or his fantasy but his serpentine "sinewy proboscis" (390).

The concrete concept of evil's conduit suggests abstract questions concerning evil's nature. The claim that the soul of the apple "fled away . . . as lightning" (123–125), recalls the lightning flash associated in legend with the Fall and the entrance of sin into the world. But could the fall of one apple really have such instantaneous and cosmic consequences? The poet's claim that "one scarce dares say he saw" (126) the lightning, and the serpentine and ambiguous syntax of his qualification that "better proof the law / Of sense than faith requires" (127–128), while echoing the problem of the serpent's sensory manipulation, is the beginning of doubt, cast in the poem as the beginning of sin. The double-obscurity of the elephant's non-existent "black dreams" (369) tightly echoes the "dark and foggy plot" (129) to which the soul flies, suggesting definitions of evil in terms of Augustinian negative metaphysics and the Fall's deprivation of mankind of divine hermeneutical light. These questions are, of course, at the heart of interpretations of the tree in the garden. While Eve may have offended in a misguided attempt to gain knowledge of good and evil considered as subjects with equal ontological and epistemic statuses, or, as the serpent said, to open her eyes, the elephant with its closed eyes reduces knowledge to virtue, thinking that "no more had gone to make one wise / But to be just and thankful" (383–384).

Still, blind to evil, it is the mouse's helpless victim.[58] We are left uncertain just what the biblical explanations of the Fall in terms of sight, knowledge, body shape, and imagination have to do with the advent of sin.

Even without transmigratory mice bearing grudges, whatever evil is, its propagation in the world is much more subtle than the elephant suspects. The ring structure compares original sin and its transmission (stanzas 10–11) with the wolf's seduction of Abel's bitch (stanzas 42–43) to again present a more nuanced approach to gender than most critics have assumed. Stanza 10 asserts that original sin is transmitted by women, that "man all at one was there by woman slain" (91), and that "the mother poisoned the well-head, / The daughters here corrupt us rivulets" (93–94). This bodily transmission of original sin seems hardly compatible with the poem's argument that the "great soul" learns sinfulness through its experiences of transmigration. Stanza 42's wolf who "took a course which since, successfully, / Great men have often taken" (411–412) implies exactly the opposite, that sin is learned from imitation of the models of the past, and that men are equally responsible for it, and "corrupt" women by seducing them. Combining memory and heredity, transmigration bridges both conceptual gaps regarding sin's transmission and gender culpability.[59]

A similar gender reversal is stanza 10's punning elision of Genesis's punishment for women, the pain of childbirth. Though "she sinned, we bear" (99), and must "love them whose fault to this painful love yoked us" (100); man's sexual desire is man's punishment for woman's sin, rather than woman's desire being man's opportunity for sin, as in the wolf's stratagem. This comparison suggests theological disputes over original sin's relationship to concupiscence.[60] But concupiscence can also be a lust for knowledge. Stanza 11 claims "corruption" (101) causes the "curious rebel" (103) to question the justice of the sentence. This corrupt inquisitive will is antithetical to the selective dissimulation of the bitch of

[58]Again lurking here may be Lucretius, who argued that thought moves faster than anything it sees, including the lightning that is iconic of speed and here associated with the transmission of evil (pp. 101–102).

[59]Unlike the poem's ambivalence, the Council of Trent decreed that original sin was propagated by generation and not by imitation.

[60]The Council of Trent deemed concupiscence an inclination to sin, contrary to scriptural identifications of concupiscence with sin.

stanza 43 who "none other's secret hides" (422) from the wolf but betrays Abel as her loyalties diverge: "her faith is quite, but not her love forgot" (425). We might view this as an undermining of Augustine's hermeneutic principle of love in *De Doctrina Christiana*; here male curiosity and female duplicity combine to neatly sever faith from love. Cumulatively, these comparisons undermine any argument that either sex is innately more sinful, lustful, deceitful, or inquisitive than the other.

It is no surprise, then, that stanza 12, though overtly stepping back from the brink of heresy, also, as Siobhan Collins has observed (198–199), compares the misogynist tendencies of theological disputation to the masturbation of "gamesome boys" who unproductively "do themselves spill" (117).[61] In this context the homoeroticism of the poem's claim that "exercise / As wrestlers, perfects them; Not liberties / Of speech, but silence; hands, not tongues, end heresies" (118–120) is detectable. One angle of satire is the suggestion that homosexuality is a possible defense against female contamination. This reduction to a single sex extends the comparison of elephant and snake by considering whether sinfulness needs an impetus from without, as the result of "meditat[ing] on ill / though with good mind" (123–124), or whether it is native, as in stanza 41's newborn wolf who "could kill as soon as go" (403). While Donne pleads, "snatch me, Heav'nly Spirit from this vain / Reckoning" (111–112), the wolf, emblem of heresy that stalks Abel's sheep, "Who in that trade of Church and kingdoms there / Was the first type" (405–406) is born of "the best midwife, Nature" (402). Though the wolf's origins are "natural," its inter-species seduction of the bitch is transgressive; though the boys' intuitive or "gamesome" activities are transgressive (or "unnatural"), the Spirit may save them. Similarly, the mixed typology of Church and state authorize the blending of corporeal and spiritual punishment. The natural and spiritual orders, as in the cases of sparrow and whale, snake and elephant, and original sin, are again confused in this comparison.

The most radical such confusion is the incarnation of Christ, who, through the hermeneutical miracles of typology, appears in stanza 8's description of the Tree of Knowledge and expands to fill the stanza.

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[61]Collins, "Bodily Formations and Reading Strategies in John Donne's *Metempsychosis*," in *Textual Ethos Studies: An Exploratory Reader*, ed. Anna Fahraeus and AnnKatrin Jonsson (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), pp. 191-207.

While orthodox on its own, comparison with stanza 44's wolf-dog hybrid emphasizes the practical complexities of the Incarnation, the temporal and spatial paradoxes of mixing natural and spiritual orders in biological and symbolic bodies.

While the poem claims that the cross "Stood in the self same room in Calvary / Where first grew the forbidden, learned tree" (77–78), the stanza's earlier use of the word "room" suggests an ambiguity between thinking of the "room" as a geographical location or as a body for the great soul to inhabit. Different versions of this legend considered both options, some holding that a material lineage linked the cross' wood to the Tree of Knowledge, others claiming only that both shared a place.[62] The ambiguity in stanza 8 collapses this spatial distinction, similarly collapsing the temporal gap between the Fall and the Redemption by digressing immediately from apple to crucifix:

> That cross, our joy and grief, were nails did tie
> That All which always was all everywhere,
> Which could not sin, and yet all sins did bear,
> Which could not die, yet could not choose but die
> (73–76)

In a poem so concerned with linking ends and beginnings through middles, this typological gap is jarring, despite the passage's emphasis on divine transcendence of space and time. The missing middle is the incarnation. Robbins helpfully summarizes these last three lines as "the standard definition of God the Son's omneity, eternity, omnipresence, absolute goodness, atonement, immortality, and humanity," observing that they are nearly repeated in the second sonnet of *La Corona* on the Annunciation.[63] That poem's address to Mary describes the similar paradoxes of the Incarnation, which "shutt'st in little room / Immensity, cloistered in thy dear womb." This echo (or anticipation) and the standard typology suggest the Virgin's womb as another "room" with which to compare the apple, given the culminating gestation of Themech in Eve. Like the ambiguous Tree of Knowledge, Mary's womb acts as

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[62]Robbins, p. 432, n. 73–78.

[63]The tenses are changed in *La Corona* (Robbins, p. 478 n. 2–4). Mueller (p. 137) and Herendeen (pp. 136–137) also make this observation.

both kinds of "room" to Christ; it provides a place to be inhabited and material to be incarnated.

The Annunciation sonnet also considers the problems of temporal and genealogical priority in the Incarnation:

> Ere by the spheres time was created, thou
> Wast in his mind, which is thy son and brother;
> Whom thou conceiv'st, conceived; yea, thou art now
> Thy maker's maker, and thy Father's mother
> (23–26)

While stanza 8 is silent on temporal paradoxes, restricting itself to the eternal and the typological, stanza 44's "riddling lust" of the wolf whose soul transmigrates into his fetal son and so "begot himself, and finished / What he began alive, when he was dead. / Son to himself and father too" (434–436) is a clever solution to these puzzles. The qualification that despite the fact that "some have their wives, their sisters some begot" (431), the recorded "lives of Emperors" contain no "lust the which may equal this" (432–433), stresses the distinction between secular and sacred understandings of history and philosophy.

Here and in the Annunciation sonnet incest diffuses through the family tree, but its material temporality is its most problematic quality. When the Trinity is viewed temporally, the Arian heresy denying the coeternality of the Son and Father emerges ("begot himself . . . son to himself and father too"). When the Incarnation and the Immaculate Conception are viewed temporally, specific medical quandaries are suggested. Stanza 43's consideration of the "just time . . . that a quick soul should give life to that masse / Of blood" (428–430) in the womb refers to the moment of fetal animation, of concern for theorists of the Immaculate Conception trying to pinpoint Mary's fetal preservation from stain. Stanza 44's claim that "Schoolmen would miss / A proper name" for the naturalistic transmigratory version of this paradox suggests scholastic ignorance of medicine while implying that their understanding of theological issues is merely nominal. Moreover, gestation tightly couples spatial and temporal paradoxes, which, deepened by the poem's discussion of abortion, blur the boundary between mother and fetus, or apple and tree. Is it a question merely of spatial separation, or of maturity? The apple is "ripe as soon as born" (81) like the wolf who could

"kill as soon as go" (403), but the hybrid wolf-dog begins its life in Moaba's tent in "sport and play" (440). Like this half-domesticated animal, Christ as a hybrid man-god had to endure human processes of maturation.[64] But the material residue of Christ's body, the eucharist, like the apple, confounds space, time, and biology. Immortal itself and granting eternal life, it is typologically the inverse of the apple, of which *Metempsychosis* says, "so perished the eaters, and the meat" (89). Of course, Christ had to die as well, like the hybrid wolf-dog, whose rejection as "a spy to both sides" (450) of his heritage suggests a cynical interpretation of Jesus's abandonment by men and God alike at his crucifixion. Space and time may exist in the gap between Fall and Redemption (or Resurrection), but the natural processes of life and death—and the political precarity of confessionally undecided hybrids—leave only uncertain "room" for divinity.[65]

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I would like to conclude by showing how the ring structure may help situate *Metempsychosis* in Donne's life near its titular date, 16 August 1601. The first relevant circumstance is Donne's impending secret marriage in December, against the wishes of her father, to seventeen-year-old Anne More, who for some time had lived in the household of Donne's employer, her uncle the Lord Keeper Thomas Egerton. *Metempsychosis*' anxiety about the laws of rape, incest, and marriage, and the masculine legal authority of fathers and social superiors must have had something to do with this uncomfortable situation.

The second important circumstance is the Bishop's Ban of 1599, characterized by Debora Shuger as "the single most sweeping act of

[64]Though legends of his infant and youthful power emphasize his divine nature.

[65]The stress here on heresy and particular issues at dispute between Catholics and Protestants (original sin, immaculate conception, eucharist, Mary, temporal and spiritual power), and the description of the wolf-dog as a double-agent evokes the climate of espionage and plotting of extremists and opportunists on both sides.

censorship" in England between 1558 and 1641.[66] This order of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, acting under direction of the Privy Council, commanded the cessation of publication of all satires and epigrams, called in for destruction several volumes of this kind and all past and future works by Nashe and Harvey, and threatened tighter controls on printed plays and English histories.[67] As secretary to Egerton, and a practicing writer of satires (however unpublished), Donne would have been vividly aware of these unusual measures.[68] Scholars have disputed the motivations of the order, citing either moralistic objections to pornographic content or the tendency of readers to make "application" of satires to specific political actors, thus undermining the state.[69] Cyndia Clegg's detailed argument that the

[66]Shuger, *Censorship and Cultural Sensibility: The Regulation of Language in Tudor-Stuart England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), p. 76.

[67]On the Bishop's Ban, see Richard McCabe, "Elizabethan Satire and the Bishop's Ban of 1599," *Yearbook of English Studies* 11 (1981): 188–193, and "'Right Puisante, and Terrible Priests': The Role of the Anglican Church in Elizabethan State Censorship," in *Literature and Censorship in Renaissance England*, ed. Andrew Hadfield (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, England, and New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 75–94; Lynda E. Boose, "The 1599 Bishops' Ban, Elizabethan Pornography, and the Sexualization of the Jacobean Stage," in *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 185–202; and Cyndia Clegg, *Press Censorship in Elizabethan England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), chapter 9.

[68]That the poem may have been written in 1601, possibly a full two years after the June 1599 Bishop's Ban, is no argument that they are unrelated. The "Whipper pamphlets," the only response to the ban discussed by Shuger, were also published in 1601 (p. 76). The "Prophecy" concluding John Weever's 1600 *Faunus and Melliflora* ironically envisions a London cleansed of spoken evil by the banning of satires.

[69]Representative of these tendencies are Boose's argument that the ban was motivated on moralistic grounds, reacting against an "Aretinized" fusion of satirical invective and pornographic sexualization, and McCabe's early and later extensively revised argument that the ban was instead motivated politically by the vulnerability of the weakened state under an aging Elizabeth to the increasing tendency of readers of satires to make "application" of satires to current political controversies and to the queen herself.

Bishop's Ban targeted the application of the banned works to the Essex affair then unfolding cites Egerton's June 1600 Star Chamber address attacking libelers in general, and "gallants" who libel Essex in particular.[70] At first glance this evidence dovetails with the arguments of critics like van Wyk Smith and Blackley that *Metempsychosis* is a satire blaming Cecil for Essex's downfall.[71] But I would argue instead that Donne's poem is by virtue of its ring structure designed to resist specific application. By frustrating the "hermeneutics of suspicion"[72] often applied to satire, like Richard A. McCabe's characterization of Donne's *Satyre IV*, *Metempsychosis* is a satire upon satire itself.[73] At the same time it indicates through its images and tropes its awareness of and reluctance to endorse the many motivations for state censorship sometimes viciously endorsed and juridically enforced by Egerton.[74]

Common traits of the satires touched by the Bishop's Ban include pornographic language and imagery, allegations of sexual misconduct (including homosexuality, bestiality, and incest), anti-feminist polemic derogatory to the queen, and general political and sectarian slander. To the extent that these are conventions, they are all conventionally present in *Metempsychosis*. I have already shown, though, how the ring-structure

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[70]Clegg, p. 215.

[71]Lara M. Crowley has presented manuscript evidence suggesting that this reading was also made by at least one contemporary reader ("Cecil and the Soul: Donne's *Metempsychosis* in Its Context in Folger Manuscript V.a.241," *English Manuscript Studies, 1100-1700* 13 [2007]: 47–76).

[72]Annabel Patterson treats this issue throughout *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984). Shuger also has an interesting and relevant discussion of this concept (pp. 183–218).

[73]McCabe, "'Right Puisante,'" p. 83.

[74]This was not an isolated defense of censorship of libels by Egerton. David Cressy cites several additional examples (*Dangerous Talk: Scandalous, Seditious, and Treasonable Speech in Pre-Modern England* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010], pp. 4, 15, 34, 61). As his *DNB* biographer J. H. Baker puts it, "Slander was an especial bugbear, and in passing sentence he often remarked that in other times and places it was punished with loss of the tongue"; he quotes Egerton's statement that "Thought is free, but the tongue should be governed by knowledge" ("Egerton, Thomas, first Viscount Brackley [1540-1617]," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., May 2007.)

undermines both anti-feminist readings of the poem and various arguments about sexual morality, and its discipline-straddling philosophical and political ambiguities and pervasive hermeneutical duplicity frustrate application to specific circumstances or even to coherent positions. If *Metempsychosis* appears to be a conventional political satire, it does so only to make its readers look harder.

More explicitly, nearly every episode of *Metempsychosis* alludes to acts of censorship and to topical ideas that might have been worth censoring. The poem's Epistle, which advertises itself as engaging in the "backbiting" typical of satires, criticizes the practice of censoring works based on their authors (such as ban's treatment of Nashe and Harvey) as worthy only of the Papal Index. The "griping" (121) snake and the willfully oblivious and constitutionally nondeferential elephant represent caricatures used in debates over satirical slander, as well as more obvious positions in the debate over the moral values of knowledge and ignorance. The "rape" of the fish-as-texts by the powerful birds utilizes a conventional trope of the censored or misinterpreted text as a violated text,[75] a trope also used for the unauthorized circulation of private documents, sometimes used in slanders or prosecutions.[76] The fish-as-texts' vicissitudes between sparrow and whale suggest the migration of texts between libertine authors and the state apparatus, to be censored either when they are incipient (pre-publication) or mature (post-publication). The whale swallows both flyers and followers, just as the state could censor its enemies and its agents indiscriminately. The whale's and sparrow's bodily sentience and aging suggest the state's intelligencers and the vulnerability of the aging queen that increased the climate of suspicion. The poem's obsessions with heirs and mandrakes may reflect allegations about Elizabeth's bastard children and lack of heirs and political maneuvering among counselors over the succession. The allusions to Absalom and the mouse-assassin's storming of an inner

[75]The "laws and Lents" made for the fishes' destruction can't help suggesting the censorial persecution of Catholics and their presses.

[76]For the trope of the violated text as censored text, see, for example, Janet Clare, *"Art made tongue-tied by authority": Elizabethan and Jacobean Dramatic Censorship*, 2nd ed. (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 206. For the violated text as pirated text, see Douglas A. Brooks, *From Playhouse to Printing House: Drama and Authorship in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

sanctum evoke both Essex's rebellion and the cause of his first trial. Despite its vivid action, a repressive silence pervades the poem and its intertexts. Though controlling the transmission of unoriginal sin was one nominal justification for censorship, the poem is usually unsympathetic to silence; it is only regarding theological speculation that the poem asks for "not liberties / Of speech, but silence" claiming that "hands, not tongues, end heresies" (119–120), and this recognition of force complicates the endorsement.

The poem's most intensive treatment of censorship, the comparison of epic poet and Petrarchan ape, considers not theological but poetic texts. As usual, the comparison mixes disciplinary explanations of agency. The cause of the ape's speechlessness is obscure, potentially due to his physiology, though "his organs" are "so like theirs" (454) that he wonders why he is tongue-tied, and potentially, as stanza 47 suggests, due merely to his conventional status as a Petrarchan lover. The epic poet similarly requires both the blessings and inspiration of the muses and his own moral and bodily purity. But potential causes of speechlessness include the censor. While at first glance the two poets might be censored for very different reasons—the epic poet for his discussion of broad historical, political, and philosophical questions, and the ape for his rampant eroticism—as usual the comparison undermines the distinction between poet and ape and the precise identification of disciplinary or (appropriately here) generic contexts for their discussion. Heuristically, the comparison can be analyzed as a *gradatio*, each step paradoxically and provocatively mingling pairs of motivations for censorship that act as discursive contexts or guiding intertexts for the reader: genre and sexual morality, sexual morality and nationalism, nationalism and religion, religion and hermeneutics, hermeneutics and charity.

The primary intertexts here are not biblical but apocryphal histories, the forgeries of Annius of Viterbo, which provided stanza 3's characterization of Noah as "Holy Janus," and of pseudo-Philo, which provided the names of Siphatecia and Themech in stanzas 46 and 51.[77] History, when not fictive, is ideally not subject to moralizing censure the way philosophy and poetry are, because it naturally describes behavior

[77]Robbins, pp. 428 n. 21, 456 n. 457, and 459 n. 509.

both good and evil;[78] because of this, the poet's opening request in stanzas 5–7 to be free of unwholesome distractions while writing all of history is impossible from its inception, and both epic invocation and Petrarchan wooing are derailed by performance anxiety. While stanzas 5–6 treat the philosophical poet distracted by "th'expense of brain and spirit" (49) of sex,[79] stanzas 46–48 treat the lecherous Petrarchan ape who is distracted by the philosophical mysteries of his being, why, despite his similarity to humans, "he cannot laugh and speak his mind" (455)—a question an over-serious philosophical poet subject to internal and external forms of censorship should probably ask as well. Claims to historicity, ficticity, and humor could sometimes be ways to escape the censor. But like the Bishop's Ban's collapsing of these categories, while the ape brings to mind Egerton's anti-Essex "gallants," the difference between the two kinds of poets is only one of emphasis. In terms of their seriousness, the ape is "through-vain" (473) while Donne in the Epistle claims to be "through-light;" Donne's claim is also to a transparency, making the identification of poet and ape a clerestory through the poem's architecture, representing the seductive powers of the text and the theatricality of all poetry.[80] This constant danger of identification of reader (or writer) with text is the premise of censorship that aims to control the adoption of morally harmful ideas, whatever their generic guise, by limiting their circulation.

Like the texts of the Bishop's Ban, the comparison mixes risqué poetics with broader political controversies. The poet's epic journey of contemplation from the Tigris and Euphrates to the Thames in stanza 6 is paired with the ape's gymnastic wooings in stanza 47; both thought and action carry the potential for "sins against kind" (468), either sexual, as in the bestiality or pederasty contemplated in stanza 47 ("beauty they in boys and beasts do find"), or in the yielding to foreign influences. The frequent satirical (and occasional prosecutorial) practice of accusing targets simultaneously of being traitors and sexual deviants is suggested here, while the Bishop's Ban's controls on English histories are stymied

[78]Sidney's *Apology for Poetry* discusses similar issues, and may influence this much more sceptical treatment of poetry.

[79]Like the sparrow, or Shakespeare's sonnet 129.

[80]Relying perhaps on the common trope of player-ape. A similar moment occurs in Donne's *Satyre IV* (Patterson, p. 93).

by the problem of demarcating fluid physical and intellectual national boundaries.

The Tigris and Euphrates may explain stanza 7's introduction of Luther and Mohammed, who claimed to reform Christianity (or Judaism) by returning to Near Eastern (if not Edenic) origins. This ambivalent influx of foreign but familiar influence peaks in the mention of the motive powers of the moon, considered by many to allude to Queen Elizabeth and a power, perhaps foreign, manipulating her. From the perspective of Elizabethan foreign policy, the pairing of Luther and Mohammed suggests Elizabethan diplomatic alliances against Spain, which featured such strange bedfellows as Protestants and Muslims, much as "beasts and angels have been loved" (472).[81] Discernable here are the sometimes contrasting official attitudes to heterodox poetry and heterodox foreign policy, whose nexus was often the censor.

Luther's introduction prompts consideration of the Reformation, which "oft did tear / And mend the wracks of th'Empire and late Rome" (67–68). Nomenclature of empire here is torn to its minima for maximum ambiguity; in a poem which spans all of history, which Empire is meant and which Rome? This ambiguity cannnot avoid suggesting the English Reformation and England's imperial ambitions. The figure of tearing and mending is compared to the Ape's pathos-filled attempt at a carnal revelation:

> He reach'd at things too high, but open way
> There was, and he knew not she would say nay.
> . . . . . .
> He gazeth on her face with tear-shot eyes,
> And up lifts subtle with his russet paw
> Her kidskin apron, without fear or awe
> Of Nature, Nature hath no gaol, though she have law.
> (474–480)

This is partly a parody of Pico della Mirandola's argument in his *Oration* for ascent up a beast-human-angel hierarchy by Ficino's erotic magic: "By this misled, to low things men have proved, / And too high: beasts

[81]This combination, echoing stanza 47's claim that "beauty they in boys and beasts do find," may also suggest frequently banned Catholic "porno-polemical" attacks on famous Reformers; see Shuger, pp. 20–23.

and angels have been loved" (471–472). But the *Oration* also argues for access to philosophical books, whose covers are suggested by Siphatecia's "kidskin apron," just as the Reformation argued for new access to the Bible. We might wonder whether the English Reformation was the spiritual and intellectual movement up a Neo-Platonic ladder Pico contemplates; or whether it was merely a material rearrangement of boundaries, territories, and allegiances, in which empires are torn and mended like clothing, or the kidskin parchment on which documents authorizing them, like Henry's Acts of Supremacy, are written. The coupling of aprons and empires evokes Saul's desperate tearing of Samuel's skirt, resulting in Samuel's prophesy of the rending of the kingdom from him (1 Samuel 15:27–28).[82] In this context the "russet paw" rhymes with and recalls Jacob's use of a kidskin to swindle Esau, and the illegitimate but red-headed Elizabeth's "natural" claim to the throne may be barely, hesitantly, touched.[83]

The Reformation, of course, brought with it changes in biblical hermeneutics. Two basic hermeneutical paradigms find emblematic representation here: the allegorical strategy of reading under the veil of Scripture and the typological strategy of piecing together disparate pieces of the text.[84] One paradox of this comparison (encapsulating the paradoxes of Renaissance syncretism like Pico's) is that the ape is at least attempting a transcendence by a hermeneutics of allegory, while the philosophical poet is bound merely to syncretically "tear and mend" his all-too-material materials, his intertexts, whether they be inherited

[82]This symbolic action accompanied by prophecy is repeated by Ahijah to Jeroboam (1 Kings 11:30–39).

[83]This chain of reasoning is supported by Pico's use of Jacob's ladder in his *Oration* to represent humanist ascent, the different use of the symbol to represent Christ in the Geneva Bible's dedication to Elizabeth, and Elizabeth's own use of the myth of Jacob and Esau to represent Catholic-Protestant conflict, identifying her reign with Jacob's. On these latter two points, see Michelle Ephraim, *Reading the Jewish Woman on the Elizabethan Stage* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008), chapter 2, especially pp. 52–53.

[84]These two approaches to poetics may be more generally associated with Neo-Platonic and Aristotelian theories of language, respectively, and associated linguistic approaches to natural philosophy. For a discussion of these issues, see Bono, especially pp. 13 and 26–47.

philosophies, theologies, or literary precedents to be imitated.[85] Censors operate similarly on texts, by rewriting them and peering beneath their allegories, by taking fragments out of context and recontextualizing them. *Metempyschosis*'s ring structure, as I have shown, both exploits and controls these fragmentations.

Finally, *Metempsychosis*'s ape confirms Shuger's demonstration that Elizabethan concepts of censorship were deeply influenced by Christian views of slander as an uncharitable speech act, frequently troped as Ham's revelation of Noah's nakedness. Though silent, the Petrarchan ape recapitulates this action as he lifts Siphatecia's apron.[86] The poet's comment on his ambition, "beasts and angels have been loved" (472), paraphrases 1 Corinthians 13's "hymn to charity" used in the so-called "Whipper pamphlets" endorsing the Bishop's Ban.[87] As a beast, the speechless ape lacks the "tongues of men and angels" of the hymn, but it has loved, exactly the inverse of the criticism of slander Shuger discusses. But the identical figure of speech, "uncovering nakedness," also seems to be used as a euphemism for sex in the sexual laws of Leviticus 18 and 20.[88] The speechless ape can be excused for wondering exactly what kind of love, verbal or physical, is valorized, and what kind is censured. The epic poet's uncomfortable narration of the seduction tries to practice charity in interpretation, but torn between empathy for the ape and for Siphatecia his poem is the dissonant equivalent of the hymn's clanging cymbals.

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[85]In terms of natural philosophy, the ape's behavior can be allegorized as a Baconian violation of nature and her "law" by proto-scientific intervention, here a debased representation of interspecies cross-breeding. The poet's method's of "tearing and mending" would represent traditional humanistic methods of science.

[86]David's regret after the similar severing of the bottom of Saul's skirt while he relieved himself in the cave of En Gedi (1 Samuel 24) is phrased in Shuger's terms of dishonor, leading to violence (the potential killing of Saul); suggestively, David is at this point followed entirely by men with grudges against the state (1 Samuel 22:2).

[87]Shuger, pp. 146–147.

[88]The phrases "uncovering nakedness" and "lying with" are mixed somewhat confusingly, uncovering nakedness having to do more with a transitive sense of shame. Sensibly, bestiality is described as "lying with," not "uncovering nakedness."

In these comparisons poetry is suspended between minds and bodies, driven and tormented by sex, knowledge, and power. Can poetry be more than a tool for satire or seduction, for example a vehicle of truth? Can it do so while neither violating others' integrity nor being violated itself? Can it be lawful? *Metempsychosis*'s discomfort with these dilemmas is painful.

The comparison of Petrarchan ape and epic poet shows how creativity is intertwined with hermeneutics, politics, and bodies. The framing comparison of the poem reiterates the interdependence of ideational and bodily knowledge by posing sexuality and high-minded musing as alternative forms of human creativity, pairing in explicit detail the opening triple-apostrophe to the sun, Noah, and Destiny with the acquiescence of Siphatecia and the gestation and birth of Themech. The life-sustaining impregnation of the earth by the sun's "male force" (12), its reciprocal extraction of "early balm" (14), and the pious description of Noah's ark as the womb of all creatures, are paired with the "virtue" (482) and "itchy warmth" (483) of the "willing half and more" (485) Siphatecia and the graphic gestation of the liver and heart of the fetus in Eve's womb.[89] The speaker's request that Destiny allow him to "understand . . . myself" (38–39) is answered by the gestation of "the well of sense, /The tender, well-armed, feeling brain" (501–502), which, while conventionally the seat of the rational soul, is here identified entirely with the sensory faculties, and houses a soul so perverted by its experiences that it "knew treachery, / Rapine, deceit, and lust, and ills enow / To be a woman" (507–509). These comparisons are strikingly gendered and involve contrasting spatial and sensory conceptualizations of knowledge. Knowers, whether "sovereign" (21), "steward" (28), or "commissary" (31), in the opening stanzas are all male, combining decreasingly empowered speculation about the universe with ironically absent self-knowledge, their knowledge presented as a gap between macrocosm and microcosm permeable by sight (as in the vision of the sun) and language (as in the narration of the soul). The knowers in the closing stanzas are all female, their knowledge embodied and transmitted in the sense of touch (as in the "tender, well-armed, feeling brain") and

[89]This comparison of Eve's womb to Noah's "womb" of an ark recalls the treatment of Christ in Mary's womb in the Annunciation sonnet of *La Corona* alluded to in stanza 8.

in the spatial relations of sex and conception, the ingress, incorporation, and gestation of other bodies. By transmigration, the great soul bridges these differences, sharing her knowledge with both sets of knowers and actors, if differently: she speaks to the narrator and outgazes the sun, but gestates in Eve and incarnates Themech.[90]

This capstone, along with the poem's pervasive legal probings, suggests a possible juridical explanation for Donne's response to the Bishop's Ban. Shuger has demonstrated in detail that whereas continental censorship was predominantly based on heresy laws and "ideological" in nature, English censorship was derived instead from injury law, and emphasized the need to protect the dignity and integrity of persons and their bodies from slander and defamation.[91] Judging by the Epistle's comparison of censorship of authors to the Papal Index, Donne and others[92] may have seen the Bishop's Ban as the beginning of a movement in England towards a more continental, blatantly ideological form of censorship.[93] One could imagine the poem as the response to a

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[90]This schematic may be oversimplified. The feminine soul in stanzas 2–4 has greater knowledge than either the sun or Noah, and in stanzas 49–51 Adam and the Ape "know" their partners. While males have ingress to female bodies, the feminine soul has ingress to male minds. Noah's "womb" is a gender-bender.

[91]Shuger's use of the concept of "hate speech" to explain apparent popular support of censorship adds a wrinkle; but while slander slaws may be broadly popular and even justified, poets are likely to resent them.

[92]Though he may be a special case, John Dee in his "A Letter, Containing a most brief Discourse Apologetical. . . ," first published in 1599 and reprinted in 1603, begs the Archbishop of Canterbury to license his past, present, and future publications based on testimony of his Christian character and service to the state. Dee seems to be responding to popular accusations that his philosophical practices were anti-Christian, and includes a list of his printed and unprinted writings, mostly scientific but including religious and political works. The title page's graphic description of a monstrous slanderous rabble may argue that the traditional censorship based on defamation law should defend rather than attack him.

[93]Louis A. Knafla writes that the 1590's saw a new overlap of common law and ecclesiastical jurisdictions particularly in the realm of defamation and slander (*Law and Politics in Jacobean England: The Tracts of Lord Chancellor Ellesmere* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977], pp. 136–137). These jurisdictional conflicts, which Knafla traces into James's reign (pp. 123–154), may explain the conflation of approaches to censorship I am proposing. Shuger

request (from Egerton?) for a legal brief subsuming the *powers* of continental ideological censorship of controversial theology and natural philosophy under the *principles* of English defamation law, which covered the kind of misbehavior exhibited by the soul's incarnations and the potentially seditious politics that are often coupled by the ring structure to heterodox theology and natural philosophy.[94] Being no stranger to censorial law, Ben Jonson's much-cited claim to Drummond of Hawthornden that Donne meant the poem "to have brought in all the bodies of the heretics" through transmigration may precisely describe this legal strategy.[95] In this view the poem is poised against an acutely felt

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clarifies some of the jurisdictional expansions of slander laws over the period, both civil defamation and seditious libel (pp. 71–72).

[94]Egerton's 14 June 1600 star chamber speech cited by Clegg implicitly and viciously compares lax English censorship law to the stricter laws of other countries: "He said there were a company that lived in London, gentlemen, nay, they were not gentlemen, men of living, they had no living, but they went brave, and lived some by the sword, some by their wits (as they said): those were discoursers of states and princes, and such were they that were movers of sedition, which before the statute of E. 3 was treason, and little other yet: *and in other countries were strangled or lost their lives otherwise, and were not worthy to live*; and inveighed against those much" (see the Calendar of Cecil Papers in Hatfield House, Volume 10, report from the Court of Star Chamber 14 June 1600, my italics). Cressy quotes a 1599 proclamation from Egerton similarly implying he was unsatisfied with the legal instruments available to him for prosecuting libel (p. 34).

[95]If Jonson is assumed to have been aware of or sympathetic to Donne's argument as I have presented it here, then his *Poetaster*, *Volpone*, and Epigram 74 (to Egerton) may offer corroborating evidence. The 1601 *Poetaster* in general corroborates *Metempsychosis*' awareness of risks of application and the perilous place of the poet in the state. More particularly, the apparently censored "apologetical discourse" appears to mention the Whipper pamphlets (57) and counters the widening of slander by iterating it, casting accusations of authorial slander as slanderous; the censored scene B (1.2.88ff) accuses lawyers of ignorance of "mathematics, metaphysics, and philosophy" and suggests dressing up the law in verse, a partial reiteration of Donne's critique, spoken to the erstwhile law-student Ovid, taken by some critics to represent Donne (cf. also Mueller's view of *Metempsychosis*'s Ovidianness; also Ovid's rumored banishment for seduction or slander of Julia). *Volpone* has been associated with *Metempsychosis* by Richard Dutton for its Pythagorean scene (1.2.1–60) and

threat of a censorial flanking movement,[96] and its counterargument is frenetically multiple. First, bodies and politics may not naturally be, in fact, history, or Bible, very dignified.[97] Second, theological and physiological doubts about agency and compulsion vitiate censorial prosecutions based on intention, and censorial control based on threats and fear. Third, pervasive scriptural ambiguities and anachronisms, particularly in laws of sex and censorship, vitiate aggressive persecutions on religious grounds, which are anyway hypocritically entangled with social custom and politics. Fourth, and most profoundly, due to basic uncertainties about the constitutions, boundaries, and integrity of bodies

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Donne's commendatory verse ("Jonson's Metempsychosis Revisited: Patronage and Religious Controversy," in *Ben Jonson and the Politics of Genre*, ed. A. D. Cousins and Alison V. Scott (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 134–161. Donne's verse wishes that the learned in divine and human law would imitate Jonson; the Pythagorean scene criticizes libelous puritans, sanctified lies, obstreperous lawyers, and reformers taking old doctrine for heresy; and Sir Politic-Would-Be claims that intelligence travels in muskmelons (2.1.70). The epigram to Egerton, written around 1616, is decidedly two-edged, can be read retrospectively, and its closing image of "The Virgin" inhabiting the rumored-senile Egerton may suggest the metempsychosis of the "great soul" as much as Astraea's return, particularly given the fact that 16 August is the day after the feast of the Assumption (as Blackley has observed, pp. 21–22).

[96]Donne's satires, letters, and other writings from the period indicate his fear of the censor. This fear would continue through his life, though paradoxically Donne was called upon several times to defend James' suppression of criticism. See Shuger, p. 154, and especially Patterson, pp. 92–105. Lynne Magnusson has written an interesting consideration of Donne's linguistic circumspection as a Bourdieuian *habitus* derived from early Catholic experience rather than the result of any sustained or specific fear ("Danger and Discourse," in *The Oxford Handbook of John Donne*, ed. Jeanne Shami, Dennis Flynn, and M. Thomas Hester (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 743–755. Particular moments of specific fear, however, do seem to stand out.

[97]Shuger, partly following Patterson, suggests that the more "modern" views of censorship in the period are based on a "Tacitean" model of the historian as exposing the unsavory truths of politics or (like Seutonius) sexual mores (pp. 207ff.). *Metempsychosis*'s citation of Seutonius's "lives of emp'rors" (434) and its hints of political allegory evoke these models; but its interest in the sexual deviancy of biblical politicians and the natural-philosophy of sex broadens the issue.

and texts, including the Bible, in *Metempsychosis* fragmentary ideas and controversies transform without limit, interpenetrate, and transmigrate between genres and disciplines, between bodies, texts, and contexts. While these uncertainties imply significant epistemological and moral challenges, they also provide techniques for evading censorial hermeneutics and powerful arguments of principle against censorship. Censorship that fails to acknowledge the malleability of language and the failure of disciplinary and textual boundaries misses the point that to ban one genre, author, discipline, or even one idea, is to ban them all—or more likely, to ban none of them.[98]

If this story of the poem's origins is at all accurate, Egerton's dual role as juridical justifier of censors and warden of Anne More could only have amplified the poem's urgency.[99] The pressing question would have been how these protean texts, disciplines and desires might, in spite of uncertainty, be not censored but orderly combined. Poetry, stuck in the middle and far from independent, is one possibility, but despite Donne's cocking a virtuoso snoot at the censors, its interpretation, as the misprision of satires shows, remains in the fallible or hostile reader's power.[100] Charity, as Donne would later argue in his sermons,[101] is a critical virtue not only in speech but also in interpretation. Even a merely

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[98]The result is a poem that may be the "principled" argument before Milton's *Areopagitica* that Shuger seeks in her introduction—if not an argument based on an abstract right to speech, then an embodied argument against censorship.

[99]Donne's *Satyre V* is usually held to address Egerton directly, implicitly accusingly. We might plausibly take the "Great Officer" in whom the soul of the sea-pie is claimed to reside as Egerton; like the sea-pie's power over texts, Egerton shared its ability to make self-serving but unhappy marriages, such as his October 1600 marriage to Alice Spencer (paradoxically a great literary patroness). If accepted, Ilona Bell's argument that sometime in the Donne-More courtship More's virtue was denounced to her father leading to his suspicion of Donne, and that Donne's "The Curse" was written with this occasion in mind, increases the likelihood that Egerton's hostility to slander motivates *Metempsychosis*. ("'if it be a she': The Riddle of Donne's 'Curse,'" in *John Donne's "desire of more": The Subject of Anne More Donne in His Poetry*, ed. M. Thomas Hester [Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1996], pp. 106–139).

[100]The second part of Magnusson's article makes clear Donne's fear of misinterpretation.

[101]See Shuger, pp. 26–27, 192, and Patterson, pp. 92–105.

provisional unity of knowledge, of bodies, or of societies is dependent on the "orderly love to the understanding" that Donne would later cite in his *Essayes in Divinity*, an orderly love that in 1601 in Donne's own embodiment seems to have been lacking.[102]

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[102]Anne's father Sir George More's book *A Demonstration of God in His Workes* (1597) may also be an implicit target. It is a somewhat simplistic and citation-heavy series of arguments against atheism ignoring all the complications of *Metempsychosis*. Many of elements of *Metempsychosis* may be suggested in it, including its argument that atheists are no better than beasts (chapter 2), its natural theology relying on outdated natural philosophy (chapter 3), its faith in the powers of reason, senses, and the harmony of creation (chapter 4), and its trust in divine justice (chapters 5–7). Thomas Hariot's apparent citation of More in a list of references to his reputation, along with the atheist charges that dogged Hariot and Ralegh, suggests the hostility towards natural philosophy that Donne seems to fear. See David B. Quinn and John W. Shirley, "A Contemporary List of Hariot References," *Renaissance Quarterly* 22.1 (1969): 9–26, especially pp. 22–23.